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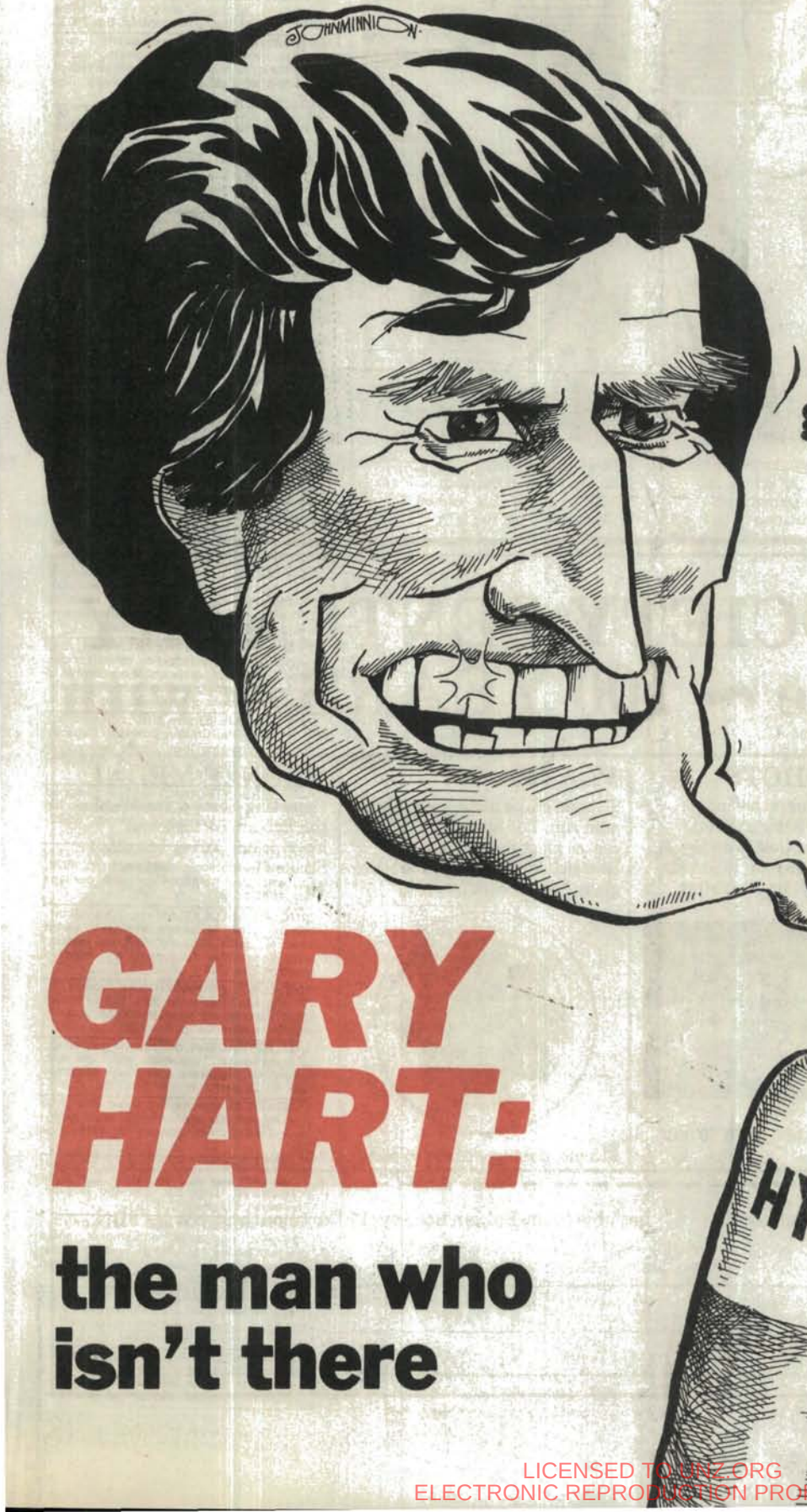

MAR 26 1984

GARY HART:
the man who isn't there

PLUS:

The price of knowing Tuite

Cervical cancer: a great British cock-up

Germaine Greer: a case of amnesia?

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New Statesman

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New Statesman Vol 107 No 2765 16 March 1984

A clever class budget

IT WAS A DEFT budget, deft at least in Tory and political terms. Mr Lawson kept the Right and the City happy by presenting what he was doing as 'fiscally neutral' — which as a matter of fact is not true (see Peter Kellner on page 7). By intoning pages of mumbo-jumbo about monetary aggregates (M this and M that and PSL the other), he managed to give simultaneously the impression that he is more numerate than his predecessor (which is true), that strict monetarism still rules (untrue) and that the overriding goal of government policy remains getting inflation down to zero (also untrue).

Stripped of the monetarist camouflage, the Chancellor is now saying no more than that, in running an economy, money and interest rates matter. Even the most unreconstructed Keynesian would agree with that. The modest economic recovery that we are now experiencing has nothing to do with sticking to something mystical called 'sound money'. It is the result of a modest relaxation of monetary and fiscal policy in 1982-3 because there was a general election coming.

So much for Mr Lawson's economics. But what about his claim to be a great tax reforming Chancellor? The only thing anyone could remember about Harold Macmillan as Chancellor was that he introduced premium bonds. Sir Geoffrey Howe pretended that things called 'enterprise zones' and 'free ports' were going to arrest the decline of British industry and commerce. Now Lawson is claiming that he is setting off on a series of tax reforms that will 'stimulate enterprise, set British business on the road to profitable expansion and bring new jobs'.

There is as a matter of fact no convincing empirical evidence one way or the other on the effect of taxation, or changes in taxation, on the behaviour of individuals, or companies. It is simply an article of right-wing *faith* that lower direct tax (in Lawson's words) 'improves incentives and makes it more worthwhile to work, and it increases the freedom of choice of the individual'. It is equally rational to assert (and on the face of it more probable) that the reduction in high marginal rates of income tax that this government has pushed through since 1979 has on average had no effect whatsoever on the performance at work of those who have benefitted, certainly no improvement that could be measured in increased gross national product.

So the tax changes that Nigel Lawson has introduced fall into two categories — the first transfers some of the burden of financing the State from one lot of groups to another; the second involves administrative tidying up. Some of the latter are sensible and overdue. Ending special tax relief on life insurance and on income earned overseas and removing the 1p duty on kerosene fall into that category. (He should, while he was at it, either have abolished the dog licence, or put it up to a sensible level. At 37½p — the decimal equivalent of 7/6d — it is a ridiculous anachronism.)

IN PRINCIPLE there is also much to be said for the Lawson approach to company tax. The present situation of a high nominal rate of corporation tax on profits — 52 per cent — which almost no company pays, because of the myriad allowances and reliefs that can be set against it, is good only for the accountants who organise and audit the system. Getting rid of most of the allowances and having a lower basic rate makes sense. But it only makes sense if the resulting yield to the Exchequer is about the same.

What the Chancellor slipped through on Tuesday under cover of this reform was a commitment to a substantial reduction in the total amount of tax that the corporate sector would pay. The corporate sector in this country already pays relatively less actual tax than in most industrial countries. The small business sector — the already pampered darling of the Right — pays very much less. Whatever the mix of reasons for the poor relative performance of British business, it is a myth that oppressive corporate taxation is one of them.

Mr Lawson also made full use of the artifical way in which the budget is constructed to pretend that he was being evenhanded in his personal tax treatment. He had decided 'to use every penny I have in hand . . . to lift the level of the basic tax thresholds, for the married and single alike'. His higher thresholds will cost the Exchequer over £1.8 billion next year. But it was only 'every penny that he had in hand' because he had set an arbitrary total and because, within that total, he chose to reduce his take from corporation tax, reduce stamp duty and abolish the surcharge on unearned income.

Still, the budget presentation allowed the Chancellor to seem to give 'the great majority of married couples' an income tax cut to make a great number of people at least £2 a week better off. But that is because on budget day he only has to answer for one half of his story. The cuts in tax at the bottom end of the scale still do not counterbalance the increases in National Insurance imposed by this government, which incidentally is not paid on earnings over £12,220 a year. Nor are the tax cuts anything like enough to pay for the increases in electricity prices, takeaway food, NHS and dental charges, rate increases and the hundreds of other charges that have gone up this year as a direct result of Treasury policy.

At the other end of the scale, Mr Lawson has been quietly but effectively helpful to 'his people'. On the investment income surcharge, the rhetoric about it being a tax on hard-earned savings of those over 65 is cant. The tax is only paid on unearned income of over £7,100 — representing invested capital of upwards of £80,000. Abolishing the surcharge is simply a way of giving more than £350 million a year to those who are mostly comfortably off. The same goes for the range of concessions that the Chancellor made on capital gains and capital transfer taxes.

If he is really concerned to even out the way in which the tax and benefit system creates inequity, then in the coming year he will demand an urgent review of the new, incredibly complex and disgracefully unjust system of housing benefit; and he will prepare to allow tax relief for mortgages at only the standard rate. But he hasn't. And, if he was, he wouldn't be Mrs Thatcher's Chancellor of the Exchequer. □

If you live in Manchester, Liverpool or Leeds...

The *New Statesman* is now on sale in the main city centre shops (station bookstalls, John Menzies, W. H. Smith, etc) in **MANCHESTER, LIVERPOOL** and **LEEDS** from **THURSDAY** mid-morning onwards. The *NS* has been available in London on Thursdays for many years and if this experiment is a success we hope to increase the number of towns where we can offer this earlier distribution.

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Taking liberties with the police

UNPRECEDENTED co-operation between the National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCL) and the Police Federation appears to have frightened the government into making limited concessions on the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill. But the changes are more likely to please the Federation than NCCL.

The two organisations agreed they had a common interest in lobbying to change the police complaints procedure outlined in the Bill. The Federation did a policy U-turn in 1981 to support the need for independent investigations of complaints, but it stresses that police officers must have access to legal representation at all stages of the investigation.

Now, Home Secretary Leon Brittan says he is 'sympathetic' to the Federation's demand for legal representation but appears unmoved on the independent investigations issue.

The two organisations, together with the Law Society, got together a month ago on NCCL Director Larry Gostin's instigation to thrash out a joint policy on the complaints procedure. Apparently the NCCL made more concessions than the police. However, a joint position was reached and outlined in an article by Gostin in *The Times* last Monday. This article will also be used as the basis for a Police Federation advertisement scheduled to appear next Sunday in *The Sunday Times*.

There are five main points in the article:

- Investigation of complaints must be by an independent body
- Legal representation at the earliest stage for police officers
- Where complaints can be conciliated, this should only be done with the consent of both parties
- Decision on whether to take criminal prosecutions should be made by the Director of Public Prosecution.

In contrast, the Bill proposes a complicated system whereby only serious complaints would be investigated by a Chief Inspector under the supervision of an officer from the Police Complaints Authority. The police officers under investigation will be denied legal representation except at the appeal stage.

Last week, however, Home Secretary Leon Brittan told the Federation that he was sympathetic to their point of view on early legal representation for police officers. But there was no sign of any change in the government's position on independent investigation of all police complaints. Larry Gostin told the *New Statesman* 'we were aware that the government might take on board the legal representation issue to try to weaken the Federation's support for independent investigation. However, the Federation is still supporting us'.

But the Federation's advertisement in the national press on Tuesday only took up legal representation. Tony Judge of the Federation denied they were dropping the demand for independent investigations. But the Federation's Parliamentary Adviser, Eldon Griffiths, has refused to table the joint NCCL/Federation amendment on independent investigations.

Even if the NCCL's co-operation with the Police Federation fails to bear more fruit, Gostin remains undeterred. 'Having a dialogue with the police is part of our new strategy of not wanting to be identified with a narrow political viewpoint,' he said.

Christian Wolmar

Scotland welcomes Kinnock

LABOUR'S display of unity at their Scottish conference in Perth last weekend was so convincing that many media pundits have compared it disparagingly with the suffocatingly dull Tory party conferences. Every single recommendation by the executive of the Scottish party was overwhelmingly endorsed by the conference.

Devolution has been the most divisive issue in the past; this year it was settled by a huge vote in favour of a directly elected Scottish Assembly and by the pro-devolution pledge — newly unequivocal — given delegates by Labour leader Neil Kinnock. The only major objector, the engineering union AUEW, was almost apologetic about its stance.

The possibility of disagreement over decentralisation within the Labour Party was also neatly avoided. A few days prior to the conference, the Scottish executive managed to persuade the national executive committee (NEC) to agree to the party in Scotland having more say in its own affairs. A motion asking for the Scottish executive to produce its own draft manifesto and to be given greater responsibility for the employment of staff and for changes to enable the Scottish voice to be better heard in the NEC, was passed almost unanimously.

An expected row over the NEC refusal to accept last year's constitutional amendment to provide women's seats on the Scottish executive evaporated when it was revealed that the NEC had just changed its mind. Possible conflict over the Common Market was avoided as there was no time to discuss a motion reaffirming Labour's policy of withdrawal.

Kinnock's passionate speech (in which he condemned what happened to Duncan Campbell of the *New Statesman*) of course won a standing ovation. This honour was bestowed on only two other speakers: the MP for Linlithgow, Tam Dalyell, for his persistent campaign on the sinking of the *Belgrano* and a 19-year-old lass from Motherwell for her barbed attack on the Government's Youth Training Scheme.

Not all those who attended the proceedings in the City Hall came away buoyed up by the experience. During Kinnock's speech on Saturday afternoon one worried-looking figure could be seen sitting in the balcony taking notes — Perth's stone-age Tory MP, William Walker.

Rob Edwards

Lynn Wilson

Common land reclaimed

Down at Greenham Common, bailiff Mr Harris (in the white jumper) and his assistant evicting women on the orders of Newbury District Council. The Council would seem to be acting to please the Ministry of Defence who want to get the cruise convoy out of the northern entrances to the base, from which it emerged for its first practice run in the early hours of 9 March.

Barbara Harford

Welcome for Armagh visitors

A GROUP of women from the UK were subjected to police and army harassment throughout a recent visit to Armagh jail in Northern Ireland.

The 180 women were taking part in an annual International Women's Day trip to stay in Belfast homes and picket Armagh jail, where women inmates are forced to undergo frequent humiliating strip searches.

At every stage of their journey, as well as during their stay, the London women claim they were questioned, searched and verbally abused. On their arrival back in London on Monday night they were met by ten police officers who followed some of them home.

The next day Scotland Yard denied that the incident had taken place. However, Inspector Tony Lamb of British Transport police, said to the *New Statesman*: 'We were told by our lot in Glasgow that 150 peace women were on the train, but they they were well-behaved and no trouble, so we had no need to meet them. But then we received a call from Hampstead police to say that they would be sending officers to the station.' Scotland Yard eventually confirmed this was the case but declined to say why the women were followed.

During their searches, the police and RUC showed particular interest

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in a recently published pamphlet which describes and catalogues the strip searches of women in Armagh. During their visit to the jail, women were told by prisoners that the searches are becoming more frequent and more severe.

On 9 March, just before the visit from the UK women, the prison governor told prisoners they would soon start carrying out intimate body searches — of the vagina, and anus. This would represent a significant escalation despite the fact that to date strip searches have produced only three unauthorised items — money, a letter and a bottle of perfume.

Jane Dibblin

Not just here for the beer

WITH TUPPENCE on the price of a pint of beer in the Budget, sales of beer may stay flat. But workers at Truman, the East London beer company, have put forward a plan to try to stop the company's decline and put the fizz back into an area of 30 per cent unemployment. *The Battle for the Brewery* has just been circulated to the remaining 735 workers — the workforce has gone down by a quarter since 1980.

Unlike the famous alternative plan produced by the Lucas Aerospace workers, the Truman report has fairly limited objectives. It sets out some suggestions for creating 38 jobs at the Brick Lane headquarters of the company by creating a museum, a sports complex, a hotel and a social centre on the site, and by improving the delivery service. There are also marketing ideas such as the development of a non-alcoholic stout for people convalescing and the opening of mobile and floating pubs.

The report also points out that there are 240 company cars being used by Truman personnel at an annual cost of £400,000. Cheaper, smaller cars should be used and those who don't need cars for business purposes should not have them, saving about half the amount. Closing the directors' dining room would save £100,000 and 'the directors would benefit from eating with the workers'. Other management perks like BUPA health insurance and GrandMet discount cards should also go, says the report, written by the local branch of the Transport and General workers' white collar section, *ACTSS*.

The initiative for the plan came from trade unionists at the brewery who felt that an alternative approach was needed to the usual trade union responses to redundancy threats. The response from the workforce has been very positive.

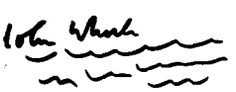
Christian Wolmar

The Battle for the Brewery is obtainable from GLEB, 63 Newington Causeway, London SE16.

MISCELLANY

Transfer market

Sinking ships, rats leaving, No 1 in a new series. As the proposed abolition date approaches, it's not surprising that some of the staff of the GLC and the metropolitan counties are casting around for other employment. Colin Maclennan, who has been putting forward the GLC's view on the London Regional Transport Bill, currently in parliament, has landed a plum job with the Department of Transport — whose views on the Bill differ somewhat from those of the GLC. Another person fleeing the abolition confrontation is Robert Davy, South Yorkshire's public relations officer. He told us that he felt 'confrontation with the government was not the right tactic' and that it was necessary for the metropolitan authorities 'to distance themselves from the likes of Ken Livingstone and the GLC'. Watch this space.



Inside politics

Meanwhile, episode 49 of a long-running series. Hugo Young, the political editor of the *Sunday Times* and a joint deputy editor since 1981, is the latest to leave the paper. He told the new editor of the *Sunday Times*, Andrew 'Two Chauffeurs' Neil, on Tuesday that he could 'no longer take responsibility for the political coverage and political judgments of the paper'. He is particularly upset by Neil's failure to consult staff over the writing of editorials. He is consulting his lawyers about a settlement on the basis of having been constructively dismissed. He has been on the *Sunday Times* for 18 years and political editor for 11. In just six months as editor 'Two Chauffeurs' has cut editorial staffing levels considerably by the rather expensive technique of interfering with the political independence of his staff.

Under siege

But credit where it is due: 'Two Chauffeurs' is quite right to mount such a plucky defence of his reporter, Barrie Penrose, over the Barclays Bank/Denis Thatcher row. Controversial journalists need their editor's support. The last time Penrose needed it was when he reported in vivid prose from the front line of the Iraq/Iran war how he accompanied the victorious Iraq forces into the Iranian border town of Khorramshah. Penrose's world exclusive filled much of the *Sunday Times*'s front page that week. Only one thing wrong with the story: Khorramshah never fell to the Iraqis.

Royal crime

The research which Mrs Thatcher used to put Prince Charles in his place during parliamentary question time was a paper, *Crime, Unemployment and the Police*, written by Roy Carr-Hill and Nicholas Stern of the London School of Economics. The latter, a 'Labour Party supporter for 20 years' was none too pleased at her treatment of his work. Mrs T used it to argue that there was no correlation between rises in unemployment and crime. But Stern stresses that his research doesn't say that. It merely found that it was impossible to come to any firm conclusions on the matter and Stern is, he says, 'aggressively agnostic' about it. But the researchers did find a definite link between local rises in unemployment and increases in the police force. Will Mrs T act on the policy implications of that?

Hankering still

If by accident you switched on David Frost's full-length breakfast interview with Cecil Parkinson last Sunday on TV-am, you may not have fully realised what was going on. It had been agreed that Frost would not ask the one question on everyone's mind — was he still in love with Ms Keays? Instead he got heavyweight stuff like the sinking of the *Belgrano*. It was, in fact, the latest ploy by the kingmakers of the Tory party to test whether Cecil can possibly make a political comeback in 1984 — or whether he will now for ever be tainted by 'a touch of the Chappaquidicks'. There is not going to be an early government reshuffle, but suddenly the Tory rank-and-file senses that 'The Boss' could be a serious electoral liability *before* the next election and may have to be dumped. So thoughts are turning to alternatives. And many don't like the two front runners before them — Messrs Heseltine and Tebbit — which explains why Cecil is being given this gentle series of comeback appearances, to see whether he could conceivably be the right-wing candidate to succeed Thatcher.

Tough for softliners

How true it is that deeds speak louder than words. In a report to last weekend's meeting of the Communist Party Executive Committee, the renegade *Morning Star* is sternly reminded of this homely maxim. The *Star*'s particular misdeed is the refusal to discuss, in a 'spirit of reconciliation', why it should sack its editor Tony Chater and his assistant David Whitfield. Another telling deed, which the Political Committee of the Party did not know about when it wrote its report, is the *Star*'s latest appointment. Replacing the 'wet' communist and parliamentary correspondent Dave Lloyd comes Mike Ambrose, hot foot and no doubt iron fist from years of employment by the Soviet agency, Novosti Press. No doubt he will be briefed by industrial correspondent Mick Costello, just returned from two weeks in the USSR. The *Star* has also demoted the young Scot Frank Chalmers whom the Party, in the days when it could do these things, had put into the paper as Editorial Assistant. Frank is now a sub-editor. Both sides are busy organising for the series of Annual General Meetings of the owning co-operative, the People's Press Printing Society, in June, when shareholders will decide all. As the breach between the hardliners (four of whom have now been expelled from the party and one, who expressed due remorse, suspended) and the mainstream has become unbridgeable, the question is: will the hardliners split away and, if so, will they be able to take the *Star* with them as their asset? Up to now, the greatest discipline on hardliners had been fear of losing the love and approval of the Soviet Union; protocol in the world communist movement demanded the Soviet Communist Party (CPSU) have special fraternal relations (sic) only with the official Communist parties of West European countries, whatever it thought of their politics. However, some weeks ago the CPSU sent delegates to the inaugural meeting of a new organisation of hardline pro-Soviet communists in Spain. In a letter to the Spanish Communist Party leadership the Central Committee of the CPSU explains that 'the absolute majority of communists in the country find themselves outside the ranks of the CP of Spain'. Two weeks ago, the CPSU recognised the new grouping of hard-line communists in the Netherlands. This is a significant change in the policy of the Soviet Communist Party to 'fraternal' parties in Western Europe, with possible major implications for the peace movement.

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The story the press can't afford to print

A MAJOR Fleet Street strike by the NGA has been kept out of the headlines. The ten-day-old strike at Reuters News Agency is being hushed up for a good reason — the national newspapers stand to lose a hefty chunk of money if word about it gets out.

Shares in Reuters owned by the newspaper proprietors could be worth over £1 billion when they are sold off in May — unless, as one stockbroker put it, the strike and prospect of continued bad industrial relations 'dampens the ardour' of prospective investors.

The dispute arose over the failure last year to agree a review of changes in responsibilities with one of the two NGA chapels (union branches). Last month, the NGA lost patience and demanded five per cent across the board as a way of revolving disputes over individual jobs, and gave the management a six-day deadline.

When the deadline passed, NGA members were instructed not to handle disputed work and two members were suspended without pay. Both NGA chapels went out on strike last week, along with many SOGAT members, a total of about 240 workers.

In the past Reuters has successfully divided and ruled its workforce. There are five chapels for the 1,163 London employees — two NGA, two SOGAT and one National Union of Journalists. The largest of the five, the 450-strong SOGAT clerical chapel, which includes 70 company executives, voted by a narrow margin not to strike.

For decades Reuters was an unprofitable but prestigious international news agency, owned by a trust consisting of the Newspaper Publishers' Association (i.e. the Fleet Street proprietors) and the Press Association (an organisation representing provincial British newspapers which runs a domestic news agency), and their Australian and New Zealand equivalents. With the advent of screen-based information technology Reuters moved into the profitable areas of business information and leasing equipment for electronic dealing in money and commodities.

The newspaper owners want to cash in on this bonanza and last month announced a new capital structure to enable them to sell the company while, as trustees, retaining the power to enforce the trust agreement and guaranteeing Reuters' independence. The company's executive directors will become millionaires in the flotation: their 'E' shares will be worth £10,000 each if the stock market values the company at £1 billion. This will make managing director Glen Renfrew's stake worth £5½ million (he paid £8,000 for it three years ago).

Nor is it just the members of the board who are doing well. The accounts for 1983 haven't been published yet, but they are believed to show that £700,000 was spent on a new executive bonus scheme.

Except for those Reuters' business subscribers who read the *New Statesman*, the first they will know about the strike will be when the format of the information on their terminals deteriorates.

John Rentoul

Labour mayor in halal furore

BRADFORD's Asian population has won a major victory in its campaign for the continued provision of halal meat in schools. Last week, councillors voted 59 to 15 against succumbing to pressure from animal rights campaigners to ban halal.

Although most Labour councillors came out in favour of supporting Asians' rights to halal, the Lord Mayor, Norman Free, declared himself against. Meanwhile, Tory education chief Peter Gilmour and other Tory councillors have consistently backed providing school-children with halal. And while Gilmour condemned a racist article in the current issue of the *Salisbury Review* by Bradford headteacher Ray Honeyford, (see *NS* 9 March), the headteacher was supported by Free.

Now an invitation to the Lord Mayor to open a multi-racial community centre in the city has been withdrawn after the management committee decided to censure him for his stance on Asian rights.

Despite the clear majority in favour of halal in the council vote, animal rights campaigners are determined not to give up. Kathy Reynolds, who started the debate by refusing to pay her rates if halal continued to be provided, told the *New Statesman*: 'We will be backing candidates who support us in the local elections in May — this is not a party political issue.'

The extreme right wing, including the British National Party, which has strong roots in Bradford, has ▷ jumped on the emotive issue of animal rights to further its own cause of racism. But Reynolds insisted that she disassociates herself from their policies and supports the Council's stands on anti-racism. 'We are having our leaflets printed in Urdu and Punjabi so that ordinary Asians can see we have no racist intent', she said.

She added that her motivation was because 'animals should have equal rights to humans' and said she did not accept that their campaign could easily be manipulated by racists. However, there is evidence that the extreme right wing is trying hard to make political capital out of it. On 7 March, for example, they organised a demonstration by pupils at a Bradford middle school against halal, with the National Front handing out leaflets.

The legality of the Asians' demand for halal to be provided in schools is not in question. Nor is the legality of the method of slaughtering animals, used in halal and kosher, which is protected under the 1974 Slaughter-house Act. The method requires that the throat of the animal is cut, so that it bleeds to death.

For the animal rights campaigners, the point is the pain caused to the animals. They are demanding that animals should be pre-stunned. However, during the Council debate, one Tory councillor, a surgeon, argued that pain would occur only in the knife cut, not during the bloodletting.

Meanwhile, the Asian community has rallied solidly behind halal, with a campaign that has involved Asians of all ages on the streets to defend their rights — many for the first time. Children were kept away from school in protest, 3,000 demonstrated and threatened to stop paying their rates if the council withdrew halal.

Dave Harrison and Jane Dibblin

Evidence that extreme right-wing youth organisations are trying to make political capital out of the issue

Combat White Nationalist paper for youth

RITUAL SLAUGHTER

The slaughter method used by British slaughter houses is quick, painless and effective. The animal has a bolt fired through its brain which kills it instantly. Jews and Muslims, however, indulge in ritual slaughter. In this method, of killing, the animal is forced into a cramped revolving drum and turned upside down. It then has its throat cut with a knife and is in agony for up to two minutes while its blood drains away. These racial aliens must leave our lands and take their evil 'customs' with them

Control units on the quiet?

SHANE PAUL O'Doherty, an Irish prisoner, is accusing the prison authorities of imposing an especially harsh and repressive regime in F Wing segregation unit at Wakefield top security prison.

In a letter to his brother, O'Doherty says that a series of unusual rules are being applied in the unit. His allegations indicate a re-introduction of elements of the discredited control unit regime. O'Doherty says that prisoners in the unit are not allowed; to speak to each other under pain of further, unspecified, punishment; to look out of the window; to attend Sunday Mass; to receive private visits from prison chaplains or welfare officers.

The prisoners in the unit are all in solitary confinement and all exercise alone. One of them, Stephen Blake, has been there since the protest in Albany prison last May — nearly 10 months. Blake has not been charged with any offence against prison discipline since the mutiny charge against him was overturned following a High Court ruling last November. O'Doherty also alleges that there is no natural light in the cells, because the windows are deliberately opaque, high, and obscured by bars.

The control unit was established in Wakefield in 1974 for what the Home Office called 'deliberate and persistent troublemakers'. The regime was 'intentionally austere'. Prisoners were held there for at least 180 days in two 90-day cycles: the first particularly severe. At any stage if a prisoner was deemed to have broken any of the large number of petty rules he could be returned to Day One of the first cycle and start the 180 days all over again. One important element of the regime was a silence rule. Public concern about the unit forced the Home Office to abandon it 'temporarily' in 1975. The unit was subsequently re-named F Wing. The Home Office denies the Wakefield regime has any 'control unit' elements.

Prison officers' demand for the re-introduction of control units have been stepped up since Leon Brittan's parole policy statement at last year's Tory party conference. Brittan singlehandedly declared that certain categories of life sentence prisoners would serve at least 20 years while other categories of fixed-sentence prisoners would not be considered for parole. Many of the subsequent protests are believed to be connected to the parole issue.

Terry O'Halloran

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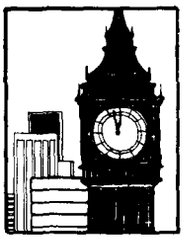

PETER KELLNER Political Editor

The script that Nigel Lawson threw away

'Mr Deputy Speaker,

My theme for this year's budget is: ME. Long after people have forgotten the inaccurate forecasts, wobbly theories and silly policies set out in the small print of all today's documents. Hon. Members will be able to tell their grandchildren, 'I was there when Nigel Lawson unveiled his first budget'. This afternoon is designed to put my predecessor in the shade and to show me up well against my accident-prone cabinet colleagues. Call me bold, call me daring, call me flash — just as long as you ignore the details and forget the numbers.

According to the speech prepared for me by my officials, 'we shall continue the policies that we have followed consistently since 1979'. This is a smokescreen designed to conceal my retreat from radical monetarism. When we first came to office, we promised to cut public borrowing sharply — from more than four per cent of GDP in 1979/80 to just 1½ per cent in 1983/84. Thank goodness we failed. Actual borrowing in the financial year about to end is likely to be £10 billion — or 3¼ per cent of GDP. To meet our original target we would have had to raise taxes or cut spending by £5 billion.

Instead we have enjoyed the fruits of a Keynesian mini-reflation during the past 18 months. As the Red Book published this afternoon makes clear, both local and central government spending has been higher than forecast. At the same time, we have encouraged a consumer boom by relaxing hire purchase controls; and we have begun to reap the benefits of cheaper sterling and lower interest rates — both, in large measure, a product of America's Keynesian maxi-reflation.

Compare this with what happened in our first year in office. As a prelude to the promised cut in borrowing, we experienced a credit squeeze, higher interest rates and sterling going through the roof. How times change. The trouble is, it takes political nerve to admit that we got it all wrong: hence all the garbage about 'continuing the policies that we followed consistently since 1979'.

My problem in preparing today's Budget has been to sustain both the rhetoric of sound money and the reality of reflation. This has been done by deploying two tricks and a prayer.

The first trick is to make a tax-cutting budget appear neutral. If I had been wanting to boast about it, I could have used traditional Budget-speech conventions and told the House I was reducing taxes by more than £2 billion a year. But I don't, so I won't. Altogether, the combined effects in a full year of raising income tax allowances and reducing corporation tax rates, stamp duty and the national insurance surcharge amount to £4 billion less entering the government's coffers. Tax increases — mainly VAT and excise duties — will claw half of that back. Indexing tax allowances and excise duties to inflation account for part of that; but, even after inflation is allowed for, the overall reflationary impact of today's tax changes will be £1.7 billion in a full year.

So how do I make that figure disappear so that the budget appears neutral? Simple: I fiddle the sums so that the 1984/85 calculations bear little resemblance to the 'full year' figure. My main fiddle is to collect an extra one-off £1.2 billion from importers, by making them pay VAT earlier. Because it is a one-off payment to help us balance our books for the coming year, it is unlikely to have any lasting effect on the behaviour of importers; whereas the other tax cuts should stimulate spending by individuals and companies. A further £500 million difference between full-year and 1984/85 figures relates to the National Insurance Surcharge. This only disappears in October, so we still have six months of surcharge income to play with.

That, then, is my first trick for making a reflationary Budget appear neutral. My second trick is, if anything, even smarter: I am stimulating demand in two ways that should actually increase the government's income. By scrapping tax relief on life insurance premiums, I expect people to spend more and save less. Even so, I reckon that the government will be £90 million better off in the coming year, £180 million the year after that, and up to £700 million better off eventually when existing policies (which still attract tax relief) have all expired.

At the same time, I am hoping to attract into the government's hands more of the savings that people do still make. By forcing banks to deduct interest at source, the only place people will be able to obtain their interest in full will be through national savings. Doubtless someone will point out that this deliberate step to help the public sector at the expense of the banks runs counter to our privatisation philosophy; but so be it.

THOSE ARE my tricks. My prayer is that America's boom lasts long enough to keep world trade rising. Stripped to essentials, the point is simple enough. So far our recovery has been led by higher than expected consumer and public spending. We intend public spending now to stop growing; and while we are trying to keep the consumer boom going a little longer, the only way we can sustain the recovery into next year is if the baton is passed to investment and exports. If America's boom falters and world trade fails to grow as fast as we hope, we shall be in trouble.

The following figures from the Red Book make the point. Between the first half of 1982 and second half of 1983, consumers' spending rose by £4.4 billion (at 1980 prices) and government spending by £0.7 billion. Total: £5.1 billion. At the same time fixed investment increased by £1.3 billion and exports by a measly £100 million. Total: £1.4 billion.

Between the second half of last year and the first half of next year, however, consumer spending is expected to grow more slowly — by £2.9 billion — while public spending levels off almost completely. Investment, on the other hand, is expected to rise by £1.8 billion, and exports by no less than £2.4 billion. Total: £4.2 billion. There are other things to take into account, like stock changes. But if the predicted export boom falls short of our expectations, our growth target will not be met, and our balance of payments will start to look very sickly.

Before I sit down, Mr Deputy Speaker, I ought to warn the House against one piece of nonsense in the speech prepared for me. It says here that 'lower tax thresholds worsen the poverty and unemployment traps, so that there is little if any financial incentive to find a better job or even any job at all'. It may surprise Hon. Members to learn that this is not so, and that the increases in tax allowances I am announcing today will have no appreciable impact on the poverty trap.

The reason is that very few breadwinners will stop paying tax either on jobs they have or jobs they seek. The people 'taken out of tax' are overwhelmingly pensioners or second earners — recent school leavers, or married women working part-time. So although lower-paid people will be better off as a result of higher allowances — and will do better than if I had used the money to cut tax *rates* — their marginal tax rate remains unchanged. Since it is the impact of the marginal tax rate, along with National Insurance payments and the tapering of benefits, that condemns people to live in the poverty trap, my Budget today does virtually nothing to help.

Had I been serious about tackling this problem, I should never have insisted on the cuts in housing benefit. These have the effect of forcing around half a million households to pay a marginal 'tax' rate of almost 80 per cent, when the tapering of housing benefit is added to tax and national insurance. Far from ending the poverty trap, I have ensured that it is deeper than ever. I am sure wealthier MPs will appreciate that had I not reduced housing benefit, I could not have afforded to scrap the investment income surcharge, and so reduce the top tax rate of the richest in our society from 75 to 60 per cent.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I came to this job determined to uphold Tory values. With this Budget I have done just that.'

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Looking under the floorboards

A Belfast labourer is serving a 17-year jail sentence on evidence that came to light in the most suspicious circumstances, reports Simon North

LAST MAY, John McComb, a 28-year-old labourer from Belfast, was convicted of conspiracy to cause explosions for the IRA. He was sentenced to 17 years in prison. There is a strong indication that material evidence used against him may well have been planted. He is in the process of appealing against both the conviction and the sentence.

The charge against McComb related to a period between April 1978 and February 1979, when he spent two months in London. The prosecution claimed that McComb had operated with Gerry Tuite, once one of the most wanted members of the IRA. Tuite is known to have been a key figure in the IRA bombing campaigns in mainland Britain during 1978 and 1979.

McComb himself, however, has never been charged with membership of the IRA. The only crucial evidence against him was the presence of his fingerprints on various documents — innocuous in themselves — which were found with a cache of explosives and weapons. The documents included various city centre maps — some of which had been targets of IRA bomb attacks — and a copy of the Communist Manifesto. Tuite's fingerprints (and others) were also on the documents.

McComb's version of how his fingerprints came to be on the incriminating circumstantial evidence is as follows. In April 1978 McComb had broken up with his girlfriend (now his wife). Because of attacks of asthma, he had given up his job as a butcher. He was fed up with the 'troubles' in Belfast and decided to come to London to look for work.

He spent a couple of weeks looking for a job and living rough and was about to return to Northern Ireland when he met a fellow countryman, who recognised his Belfast accent, in a pub in North London. The man offered him accommodation and said that he might be able to find McComb work.

During his trial McComb chose not to tell the court the location of this flat, or to give a description of the man for fear that he would be classified by the IRA as a 'grass', with the consequent danger to himself and his family. McComb admits that while he was living in the flat he met Gerry Tuite once, but that he did not know that either Tuite, or the man he was staying with, were members of the IRA. He remembers that there were maps and other documents lying around the flat, which he sometimes tidied up. This is how his fingerprints came later to be found on them. In support of this account is the fact that his fingerprints were found only on the covers of the maps, whereas the fingerprints of Tuite and others were found on the actual maps themselves.

Keith Borer: critical defence expert

McComb, having failed to find work in London, returned to Belfast in late November or early December 1978, before the spate of bombings began on mainland Britain at the end of that month. Three witnesses testified at his trial that he was in Belfast at that time. He had been in London only two months. He spent Christmas in Belfast, but in the New Year went to look for work in the Republic, eventually finding a job in a meat factory in Dundalk, Co. Louth. He stayed there for two years, returning to Belfast in May 1981, by which time he was married and had a small daughter. He stayed in Belfast for another eight months, until he was arrested in January 1982.

His arrest was made 18 months after the documents stored with the explosives (also used to incriminate Tuite) had been discovered. This is despite the fact that he had been living quite openly, 200 yards from a police barracks in Mount Pottinger Road, Belfast. Tuite himself had been arrested in London two years before, but had escaped from Brixton prison while awaiting trial.

McComb suggests that his own arrest is related to the official embarrassment at Tuite's escape. (Tuite was later arrested again in the Republic.) McComb's fingerprints were on police records because of a previous conviction for armed robbery, when he was 18. If he had earlier been suspected of operating for the IRA, he could have been picked up many months before, either in the Republic or in Belfast.

The incriminating documents which became central to McComb's conviction had been found in August 1980 — almost two years after his brief visit to London. They were 'discovered' under the floorboards of a flat at 144 Trafalgar Road in south London, which McComb had never visited. Alongside them were an Armalite rifle, a shotgun, ammunition, sufficient explosives to blow up the entire block, 72 detonators (some of which were home-made) and a tape, allegedly of an IRA hit list.

Wrappers for the explosive, highly impregnated with nitro-glycerine, were found at the same time on a shelf in the flat's toilet. The haul was discovered by tenants who, while decorating, noticed a loose floorboard, which had been sawn through and had marks which suggested that a jemmy had been used to lever it up.

WHAT RAISES DOUBTS about the authenticity of the cache at Trafalgar Road is that it had not been discovered one and a half years before, when the flat had already been submitted to a three-day search by the ATS, described by them as 'thorough'. This first search, in February 1979, had been carried out because the then tenant, Helen Griffiths, had contacted the police to say that her boyfriend fitted the identikit description of Gerry Tuite. She had returned from a long stay in the US to find no trace of Tuite, but that her flat had clearly been well used and someone had left in a hurry.

The case against McComb depended upon the haul having been hidden *during* his stay in London, and, therefore, *before* the first search in February 1979. It was necessary, then, for the ATS to explain how their highly-trained officers and specialist equipment had failed over three days to find the large cache of explosives under the floorboards — a cache discovered so easily and casually one and a half years later by decorating tenants.

During McComb's trial the police came up with various explanations for this apparent incompetence. Their explosives detector failed on the first occasion because the battery did not

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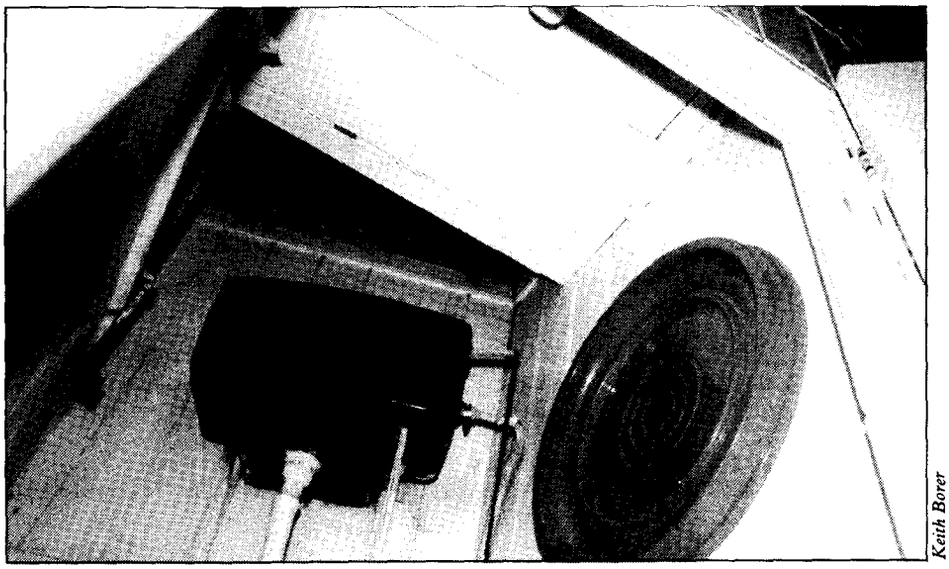


Keith Borer

144 Trafalgar Road: how could the ATS have missed the shelf?

work (and there is no way of checking the serviceability of the battery), they said. A second detector failed because the flat was 'too cold'. Attempts to obtain from official sources the minimum temperatures at which a PD3 indicator (the model used) will still operate effectively have been foiled because the information is held to be a state secret.

However, Helen Griffiths and one of the ATS officers, Detective Constable Mills, stated that the heating was on in the flat at the time: and the equipment manufacturer's chemist, Dr Brokenshire, confirms that the PD3 detector will operate *below* freezing point. The *Guardian* weather report for London shows that the outside temperature during the first search was between five and seven degrees Centigrade. Below the flat is a paint shop, which was in constant use at the time. Dr Keith Borer, an independent explosives and chemical consultant who gave evidence for the defence, has calculated from the structure of the building, 'that the temperature in the bedroom floor void, where the haul was found, would have been at least 15 degrees C.'.

Furthermore, the haul under the floorboards was not hermetically sealed. Patent claims and independent tests on the PD3 have shown that it is extremely sensitive. It is capable of detecting one part of an explosives substance in one billion parts of air, good at searching enclosed areas even through shut doors and, if handled properly, 'it should equal and even outperform trained dogs.' The detector was operated for the police by the late Dr Elliot, one of the foremost explosives experts in the country, who worked from the Woolwich Arsenal.

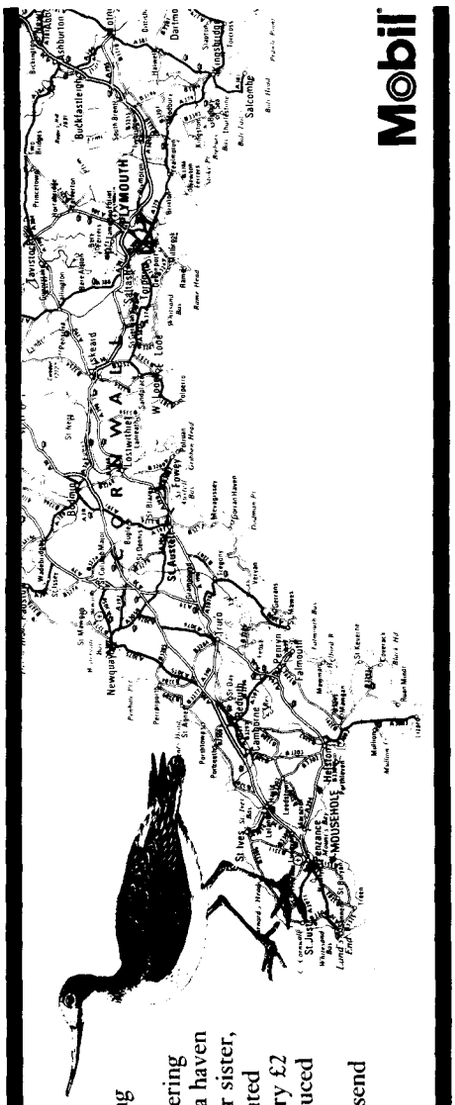
These are not the only contradictions. During the first search, traces of explosives were found on items in the flat. As Dr Borer remarks in his written report for the defence, 'It would be logical to assume that the machine had indicated something' — and was therefore working effectively, contrary to the statements by ATS officers.

The fact that traces of explosives had been found should have meant that the ATS were very thorough in their first search. However, it seems amazing that having discovered traces of explosives, the team were not encouraged to search further, which should have led them to take up the floorboards. ATS officers contradicted each other as to why they hadn't looked under the floorboards. One officer said that they had moved some furniture, but did not lift the carpets. Another said that they did lift the carpets, but did not move any furniture. They said that it never occurred to them to look under the floorboards and that they had never been shown how to search premises.

In a search of this kind it is standard procedure to use a trained dog to seek out explosives. Dogs were used in the second search and, even before entering the front door of the flat, sensed the fumes from the nitro-glycerine wrappers on the shelf in the toilet.

The ATS claimed that the first time round dogs were not used. However, during the trial of Gerry Tuite in Dublin, a year before

Early October 1978	**McComb leaves Belfast and comes to London**
Mid-October 1978	**Meets fellow Irishman, who offers him accommodation**
Late November 1978	**McComb returns to Belfast**
17 and 18 December 1978	**Bombs, planted by IRA, explode in Bristol, Coventry, Manchester, Liverpool, London**
28 February 1979	**144 Trafalgar Road searched for the first time: North Road also searched at this time**
12 December 1979	**Tuite arrested in London and held in Brixton prison**
26 August 1980	**Tenants find explosives etc. under floorboards at 144 Trafalgar Road**
December 1980	**Tuite escapes from Brixton**
24 January 1982	**McComb arrested in Belfast, transferred to London**
4 March 1982	**Tuite arrested in County Louth, Ireland. Held for trial in Dublin**
June/July 1982	**Tuite's trial takes place in Dublin. Sentenced to ten years**
May 1983	**Explosives found at 1 North Road, London. McComb stands trial in London, sentenced to 17 years**



Mobil

Feathering their nest

Britain has long been a nation of animal lovers. Particularly when it comes to preserving the rich variety of wildlife within these shores.

The Mousehole Wild Bird Hospital and Sanctuary in Cornwall, begun by the pioneering Yglesias sisters, is a prime example of such concern. Founded in 1928, it soon became a haven for sick and homeless wild birds. By the late 1970s, however, Dorothy Yglesias and her sister, Pog, were badly in need of assistance. Hearing of their financial plight, Mobil contributed £10,000 to the hospital and followed this with a year-long matching grant of £1 for every £2 raised from other sources. As a fund-raising tool for the future, the company also produced the award-winning, full-colour film, 'The Wild Birds Calling.'

Both Yglesias sisters have since died. But their work lives on. To help in that work, send a contribution to The Mousehole Wild Bird Hospital and Sanctuary Association Ltd., Mousehole, Penzance, Cornwall.

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McComb's trial, Detective Constable Mills contradicted this claim by telling the court that dogs *had* been used during the first search. Judge Hamilton, having heard the testimony of DC Mills's colleagues, interrupted and told him he was mistaken. By the time McComb was tried a year later, all the police witnesses had come to an agreement that dogs had *not* been used during the first search. They said that they had not wanted to draw attention to the fact that the place was being investigated, because they did not want to alert Tuite.

If the failure to look under the floorboards seems hard to credit, the failure by the ATS to look on the shelf in the toilet (in the course of a search lasting three days) seems even more unlikely. The police must have had recourse to the toilet themselves during that time. Graffiti on the toilet walls actually leads the eye up to the shelf.

When the wrappers were 'discovered' in August 1980, the officer who found them said the fumes were so powerful that he had to put them in a plastic bag to avoid getting the characteristic headache induced from inhaling nitro-glycerine fumes. If anything, the fumes would have been more potent 18 months before. Yet none of the tenants complained of odd headaches or uncovered the wrappers. Between the first and second search the flat was continuously occupied, except for a brief period of three months between April and June 1980. After this short vacant period, new tenants moved in and a month later came across the explosives and the documents.

A week before McComb's trial began on 9 May last year, the ATS, in an orchestrated fanfare of publicity, 'discovered' 10 lbs of nitro-glycerine and other explosives under the floor-boards in a flat at 1 North Road, Highgate, in north London. This discovery bore a striking resemblance to that at Trafalgar Road.

During their investigations in February 1979, when they had first searched 144 Trafalgar Road, police had also submitted 1 North Road — suspected of being an IRA safe house — to a three-day search. Although they had found traces of explosives under the bath, the ATS again failed, they say, to look under the floorboards.

The explosives suddenly uncovered at North Road a week before McComb's trial last year were theoretically at least four years old and, therefore, in a potentially volatile condition. Yet police officers, smiling for the cameras, taking no obvious safety precautions, were seen removing them in cardboard boxes and placing them in the boot of a brand new Police Rover 3500.

Because of the obvious relevance of this discovery to McComb's imminent trial, Keith Borer, as defence expert, was allowed to inspect this second find of explosives. He has told the *New Statesman* that the explosives he saw were, in his opinion, too new to have been stored under the floorboards for four years. His film — with photographs he took of the explosives — was removed from him and has not been returned, despite requests by McComb's defence team.

Meanwhile, John McComb is still serving 17 years, simply because his fingerprints were found on innocent documents found alongside a cache of explosives in a flat which he never visited. □

MEDICINE

Case for treatment

Despite new evidence that properly directed programmes of screening women for cervical cancer can be highly effective, Britain's programme stumbles along wasting time, money — and women's lives. James Le Fanu reports

AT THE beginning of March Dr Robert Yule, Consultant Pathologist at the Christie Hospital in Manchester told a doctors' meeting in London that: 'If there were any doubts that we are experiencing an epidemic of cervical cancer amongst young women, those doubts are now gone'.

He should know. As head of one of the largest laboratories in the country processing cervical smears, he has seen the mortality rate in women under the age of 35 triple in the last decade. But it is not just a numbers game. The disease itself has changed: 'It develops more rapidly, is much more aggressive, responds poorly to treatment and the patients do much worse,' he said.

This bad and, for some, fatal news might be seen as an unfortunate — or inevitable — consequence of the contraceptive pill and changed sexual habits of teenage girls. It could be equally due to a change in the style of the virus which is putatively responsible for the cancer.

Either way the increase in mortality would not have occurred had the cervical screening programme been preventing this preventable cancer.

Despite a widespread prejudice that screening should, in itself, reduce the death rate, this is not necessarily the case. If, for example, the screening method is too imprecise, or the cancer has spread before it can be detected by screening, then resources allocated to such programmes would be wasted. Such doubts have haunted the screening programme for breast cancer and indeed justify the current government-financed trial of the efficacy of screening for this disease. Screening for cervical cancer has, in the past, been similarly open to doubt. It is no longer undertaken by the Scandinavian countries.

IN THE MID-FIFTIES Finland, Iceland and Sweden set up national screening programmes for the disease; Denmark had a slightly less comprehensive one and Norway none at all. When in 1982 it became possible to compare

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Health Minister Clarke: words but no action

the incidence of the disease between these countries it was quite obvious that there had been a decline in incidence in those countries with a programme — in Iceland by as much as 60 per cent — while in Norway it had, if anything, increased. (Screening for cervical cancer can detect 'pre-cancerous cells'. Untreated, these can develop into cancer. However the condition can usually be successfully treated, hence screening can cut the actual incidence of cancer.)

This is strong empirical evidence that cervical screening works and in Scandinavia probably saves 1,000 lives a year. In Britain, enough cervical smears have been taken over 12 years (approximately 28 million) to have screened virtually the entire female adult population twice over. Up until the recent change in the nature of the disease among young women this should have been sufficient to have hugely reduced the disease. Yet the screening has had little impact on the disease. From 1968 to 1980 the death rate from cervical cancer fell by 18 per cent, actually killing 1,939 women in England in 1980.

The failure lies not in the scale of the programme but in its organisation. Any effective programme designed to screen populations rather than individuals needs a central 'call' system with a reminder or 'recall' every five years.

But in Britain the system relies entirely on the initiative of the doctors and the opportunities to perform the smear. For women under the age of 35 attending family planning and antenatal clinics there are many such opportunities and indeed 80 per cent of this group have been screened. But only 6 per cent of the mortality of the disease occurs in this group, despite the increase, the remaining 94 per cent occurring in women over 35 of whom only 30 per cent have been screened. So £60 million a year (the precise figure is not known) is being spent on a programme for a very small return.

Though it might be difficult to imagine a more ludicrous and wasteful system, the events of the last year have if anything made it worse. A copy of each cervical smear used to be sent to a central clearing house in Southport to become the basis of a recall system, reminding those who had already had a smear to attend for another in five years time. Though this has been compared to washing the clean linen, over a period of 40 years — as the intensively screened younger cohort of women became older — it could in the end have formed the basis of a national screening programme.

From April 1983 the Southport scheme (which admittedly was not very efficient at its job) was disbanded. The records held centrally were decentralised to the local health authorities which, it was hoped, would be in a better position to set up proper 'call' systems and so catch those who had previously fallen through the net.

No financial provision was made for this change-over and the result has been chaotic. Only two 'call' schemes — in Oxford and Sussex — are in operation; most health authorities pressed by other financial demands have compromised by setting up a recall scheme much as operated at Southport; many have no scheme at all and the Southport records gather dust in the offices of local administrators while the authorities argue what sort of scheme should be set up and who should be responsible for it.

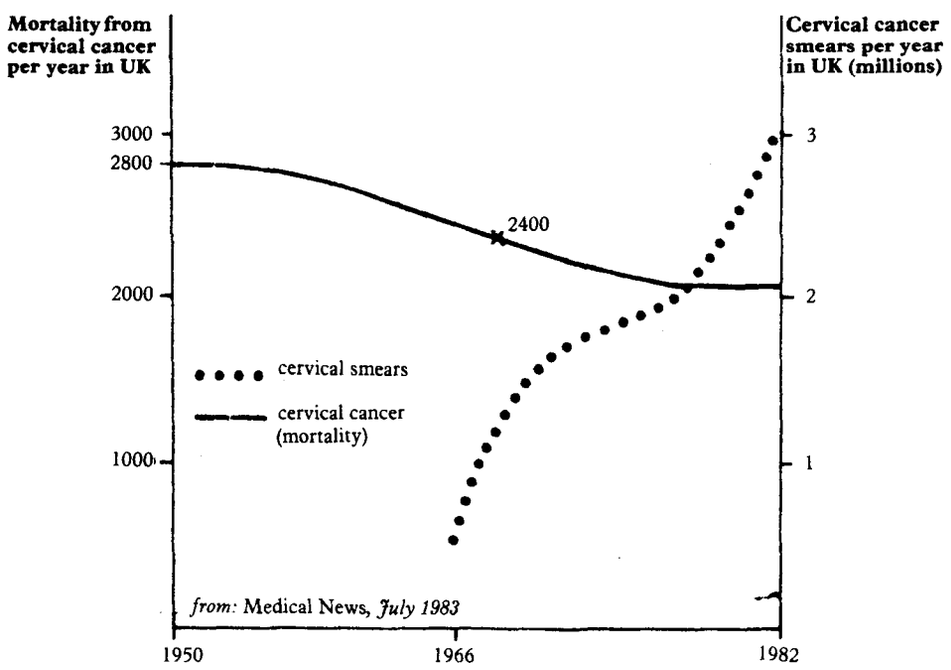
It would be charitable to believe that the government is somehow unaware of this shambles. It knows very well what is going on. In 1982 the DHSS's Committee on Gynaecological Cancer (CGC) reviewed the screening programme, made specific recommendations on the optimum scheduling of cervical smears and added: 'women should be positively called for screening whether or not they have had a previous negative smear'.

On 31 October last year Kenneth Clarke as Minister of Health replied to a written question from Gwyneth Dunwoody on government policy on cervical smears by endorsing the CGC's recommendations. He conspicuously omitted any mention of the need for a central call system. This government 'policy' has still not been circulated to those responsible for its implementation.

Now that the natural history of the disease seems to have changed, policy should change to deal with it. Though the rise in mortality is occurring in those most intensively screened, it is quite obvious that they need to be screened more frequently and regularly than before. But how to reach them? Were there a central programme all that would be needed would be to flip a switch and change the screening schedule to once every three years. That is just what the present scheme ensures cannot be done.

A meeting of the Faculty of Community Medicine in London last year was told that the cervical screening programme was 'like driving along the motorway navigating by the rear mirror'. It is perverse, unlikely to reach its destination and for the women of this country dangerous. □

James Le Fanu is a doctor and medical journalist



Des Wilson

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BRITISH TELECOM

Will anyone buy British?

The privatisation of British Telecom has brought to light the company's embarrassing habit of massaging its accounts. Philip Geddes reports on the difficulties this is causing the government

THE GOVERNMENT's plans for the privatisation of British Telecom have run into some serious and hitherto unreported minefields. Now, in the House of Lords committee stage, the government has been trying to clear one of them by introducing a new clause into the Telecommunications Bill. This states that would-be investors in a private BT will not have to be furnished with a full, pukka, Stock Exchange prospectus before buying shares.

On the face of it, that is hardly earth-shattering. But behind this modest amendment lies months of agonising in British Telecom and the Department of Trade and Industry over a seemingly insignificant oversight in BT's management operation. It was referred to at last autumn's Conservative Party conference, when Mr Cecil Parkinson criticised BT for having only one professionally qualified chartered accountant on its staff. What at the time looked like a minor Tory grudge against a nationalised industry has turned into a major embarrassment. Put simply BT's — and the government's — problem is that the Corporation has never produced proper accounts.

The rules of the Stock Exchange state that any company seeking a full Stock Exchange listing in Britain has to produce properly and professionally audited accounts going back over at least five years so that investors can make a real judgement of the company's performance. On top of that companies must have complied with various accountancy standards — for example, on depreciation rules for the cost of capital investment.

BT's accounts do not comply with the Stock Exchange's requirements and the corporation has for years been quite ruthless in tampering with its own accounting standards to produce appropriate levels of 'profit'. When profits looked like being too high, as they have in recent years, a 'supplementary depreciation charge' has been written into the books to reduce the final bottom line profit figure — and the complaints from overcharged subscribers.

In last year's accounts, for example, £626m has been 'lost' off the final profit in this way — and that was on top of an existing £825m of 'normal' depreciation. The result has been that theoretically much telephone equipment is a write-off almost as soon as it has been installed. It may come as a surprise to many 'phone users to know that for accounting purposes the 'phone in their home is being 'written off' over three to five years. Try asking for a new 'phone in three years and see where it gets you!

Similarly, much exchange equipment is being written off over the absurdly short period of 10 to 15 years — when it will not conceivably be replaced in that time. The end result of all this inspired figure massaging is to produce figures — and books — which do not meet Stock Exchange requirements.

This creates the problem that ministers are now wrestling with. Either BT has to produce properly audited and prepared accounts for the past five years — a gargantuan (probably impossible) task which would take several years and employ thousands of chartered accountants — or the rules have to be changed. In the Lords ministers are simply removing the requirement for a proper prospectus. To all intents and purposes, the rules which exist for the protection of investors are being changed for the benefit of one company. And that won't go down too well in the City.

A possible alternative has been scouted — a sale by private treaty, in which large chunks of the state's holding in BT would be sold off by the government to other companies. In these circumstances BT's stock would not be traded publicly and could therefore avoid any Stock Exchange rules. But it would create political problems for the government. It would ruin Mrs Thatcher's vision of a 'shareowning nation'. Any such sale would inevitably involve overseas companies. Few British companies — save the oil giants — have the sort of money the government is looking for from the sale — a reported £4bn or so.

On the other hand, American companies have that sort of money — but would they be ideal buyers of a 'national asset' like BT? One wag in the Industry Department has reportedly suggested selling off a chunk of BT to American Telephone and Telegraph. AT&T, better known as Ma Bell, has just been forced to sell off its shareholding in its so-called Baby Bells — the local phone operating companies in the US — and is reported to be looking for new businesses abroad. But breaking up an old monopoly only in order to create a new one would hardly go down well in Britain.

WIGGLING ITS WAY round the Stock Exchange's rules isn't the government's only problem. BT's own technological backwardness also threatens the success of privatisation. The government has a simple choice: it can either pursue a policy which benefits the Treasury and the PSBR, or one which benefits the economy and the nation.

The problem lies in BT's belated amble into the electronic age. So far only a minute proportion of BT's network is fully electronic — some cross-London switching and a handful of pilot local exchanges. But access to digital switching provided by electronic exchanges is of the essence in the information age. Computer networks and the myriad 'bolt on' attachments to the modern 'phone only really make sense when you have access to a digital network.

BT's proud boast at the moment is that it is installing four new digital exchanges every week — a figure that sounds splendid, but means that at that rate the whole network won't be fully electronic for 30 years. Even London and the main business centres won't be fully electronic until towards the end of the decade — which has serious implications for international businesses seeking a base. By contrast more than one in five French subscribers now uses a fully electronic system — and the whole of Buenos Aires, for example, now has digital switching.

Far from catching up, we are in fact falling further behind the rest of the world. In OECD countries as a whole between 20 and 25 per cent of new switching investment is digital — compared to only 4 per cent in the UK. A huge investment is needed to close the gap between Britain and its major commercial rivals. BT claims, with some justice, that this gap is not its fault. For years BT's investment policy has been dictated by the need to comply with Whitehall's Public Sector Borrowing Requirement. BT simply was not allowed to go into the capital market on its own account, however much it might have wanted to or could afford to. Whitehall knew best, and it is the mandarins' fault that we are slipping behind the rest of the world.

Such a state of affairs could of course be changed by privatisation. An independent BT could raise money on its own account without reference to the PSBR. But of course that would hardly be good news for the government's privatisation plan itself — or for the investor hoping to make money out of a stake in BT.

What private investor is going to rush into a company that, according to its own management, is in need of massive amounts of new investment — investment that will undermine BT's profitability for years to come. The sums being talked about in BT's management are almost stratospheric — thousands of billions of pounds. They are certainly enough to frighten off any self-respecting investor looking for a decent return.

The fact that no decent prospectus, and therefore presumably no clear management statement of the future cash requirements of the business, will be issued should give any City investor pause for thought. Perhaps this is one Sale of the Century that might be given a wide berth. □

THIS ENGLAND

£3 book tokens for entries printed. (On postcards, please.)

□The mailing by Conservative Central Office of copies of Labour's manifesto to about 5,000 firms is said to have paid dividends. Apparently, companies directly affected by the manifesto, such as private employment agencies which Labour wants to abolish, were specially selected resulting in what the *Telegraph* described as a 'fund raising coup'. Labour party headquarters gave the Conservative Party a special bulk discount on the purchase. — *Tribune* (Leighton Andrews)

□The racing authorities have baulked at a request by owner Phil Bull to name a new horse Ho Chi Minh on the grounds that the name might cause offence. Bull retorted that the appearance of a horse called Henry Kissinger had already given him offence but the Jockey Club was not to be swayed. — *Daily Telegraph* (George Moor)

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Midland Bank

Group results for the year ended 31 December 1983

The figures in brief

	1983 £m	1982 £m
Trading profit before bad debts	**612**	511
Profit before taxation	**225**	251
Attributable profit	**114**	145
Earnings per share	**60.6p**	68.9p*
Dividend per share	**25.5p**	25.5p
Total assets	**£52,613m**	£47,999m

** Before exceptional taxation credit.*

Comments by the Chairman, Sir Donald Barron

The Midland Group's objectives for 1983 were to strengthen its capital ratios, to increase marketing impact, to improve further the cost position and thus to continue the upward trend of profits and earnings.

As the year progressed, it seemed likely that all these objectives would be achieved – even allowing for the higher bad and doubtful debt charges we planned to make. However, in December, the Board of Crocker National Corporation, in which we hold a 57% equity interest, decided that they should provide an additional US$107m principally against possible bad debts, making their total provisions for the year US$173m (£120m).

Trading profit, bad debts and cost control

Trading profit before provisions for possible bad debts was 20% up at £612m against £511m last year; pre-tax profit was £225m compared with £251m. There were good performances from our major operations in the UK banking, International banking and Treasury divisions with continued improvement in the trend of costs, interest spreads and non-interest earnings.

In arriving at the pre-tax profit, provisions for bad and doubtful debts amounting to £318m have been charged compared with £196m last year. The division of the 1983 charges was £228m for specific provisions and £90m for general provisions and these figures compare with £162m and £34m respectively in 1982.

Capital position strengthened

Steps were taken during the year to strengthen further the Group's capital position. A successful rights issue announced in July raised £155m and following a 'shelf registration' in the United States, US$150m of Guaranteed Notes were issued there in November. In view of favourable conditions in the Eurobond market in February 1984, the opportunity was taken to issue US$200m of Guaranteed Floating Rate Notes as part of the Group's normal capital management programme.

The free capital ratio at the year end was 4.6% compared with 4.0% at the end of 1982.

Outlook

We continue to keep firmly in our sights our main objectives of profitably employing our assets, of controlling costs and of giving the highest level of service to our customers around the world. This involves building on the strengths of the Group and of directing the necessary resources, both management and capital, to the areas where additional support is required. The changes made are all designed to ensure that the upward trend of profitability and earnings will be resumed in 1984.

The Report and Accounts for 1983, including the full Statement by the Chairman, Sir Donald Barron, will be available after 26th March 1984. Shareholders will receive copies automatically. Others are invited to write to: The Secretary, Midland Bank plc, Head Office, Poultry, London EC2P 2BX.

Midland Bank Group

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DIARY

Am I alone in searching for the new thoughts of the hard Right? Their arrival has been announced for ten years now. Yet where *are* they? That there has been a serious collapse in Labour's thinking is evident, and politically a new vileness is in the ascendant. But enemy theory seems little more than old prejudices; e.g., that 'the nation' is transcendent and blacks should leave. In a *Listener* article, Alan Ryan suggests that Conservatism is anyway congenitally incapable of new thought; Peter Riddell opened his recent study of the government by observing that the Thatcherites have made almost no contribution to the debate about Thatcherism. Could it be that they just dare not open their mouths for fear of her whom they call 'The Boss'? She in turn calls the cabinet 'my blue bunnies' and bunnies are not supposed to have ideas. In or out of the hutch, they eat lettuce and look forward to hereditary peerages.

○

Godfrey Hodgson's colour supplement survey seemed to confirm that blue brains put lettuce first. I was amused by the notion that Peter Jay — who could not even run a breakfast television station when he tried — converted not only his father-in-law, Jim Callaghan, to monetarism when he was Prime Minister, but also The Boss herself. I have to report that Jay is not quite the great 'hegemone' that Hodgson makes out — his influence on the Tories trickled out only to poor old Keith Joseph.

○

This coming Saturday the ICA, in association with the Goethe Institute, holds an international conference on 'Culture and the State'. It will be packed with official luminaries from governments and parties around the world. Frustrated by the intellectual zero that the new Right has so far proved to be, I challenged the organiser, Lisa Appignanesi, as to why she hadn't invited any British Conservatives. She protested that she had, and rattled off a list of those apparently cultured office holders in the British State who were so sorry but they just had to decline. Chalk up another one to The Boss!

○

Few things are more likely to bring on tears of boredom than intellectuals of the Left discussing the nature of everyday life, or, as they put it, of 'quotidian existence'. Lacking a sense of the comic, they simply invite ridicule. Take this description of the wall round Blackpool's Pleasure Beach:

> It. . .constitutes a symbolic boundary, operating definite inclusions and exclusions which, to a degree, mark off the forms of pleasure available within it from those available outside it in the rest of Blackpool.

Which is why reading structuralist prose can be like banging your head against a brick — sorry, a symbolic boundary.

○

The quote comes from the first issue of *Formations,* on 'pleasure' — it left me dreading a special number on 'seriousness'. The second issue, which is just out, on 'Nation and People', has much more bite, especially a brilliant piece on Baldwinite Conservatism by Bill Schwartz. Unfortunately, he did not continue on to Jim Callaghan. . . The magazine is published by Routledge at the staggeringly unpleasurable price of £7.95.

○

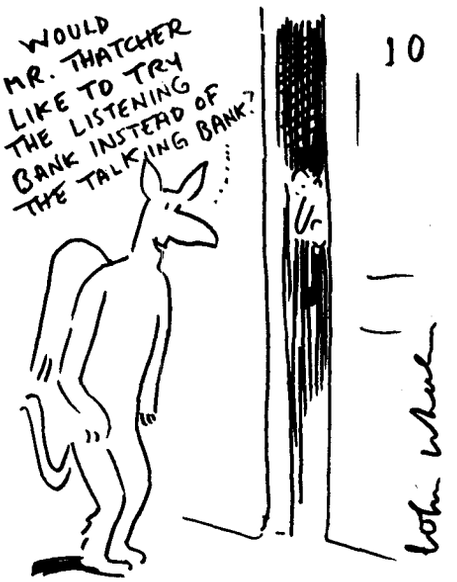
Of course the Left is not supposed to have a sense of humour. When Healey and Benn put on their recent double-act at Chesterfield, it caused quite a problem: how to report Benn enjoying himself? The London *Standard* handled it like this:

> Benn is a man who does not often laugh. In fact, he seems to regard laughing as something you should do in the privacy of your own home.

What a cold-faced and miserable man he *really* is:

> But on the splintered (note the adjective!) wooden school stage where he and Mr Healey tried to forget their differences, he laughed and he laughed. It was if an old fashioned fairground machine had been activated by a coin.

So you see, he didn't *really* laugh at all. This technique of damned-if-you-do-and-damned-if-you-don't was also visited on Benn by John Junor of the *Sunday Express.* Alleging that Benn was 'extremely wealthy', he likened him to Richard Acland who gave away his ancestral estate in 1944. Junor reckoned that the land



would be worth £16 million today, thus implying that Benn is a multi-millionaire. The columnist agreed that Acland was 'a bit of a nut case'. Nonetheless, he finds it revealing that Benn has given away 'not one penny either of his own or his wife's inherited boodle'. Will the *Sunday Express* now campaign against the Married Women's Property Acts?

○

Great Truisms of World Leaders (continued, further contributions welcome): Collier-Macmillan has just published Kissinger's report on Central America. This is how the war criminal warms up to his task: 'Perhaps, over the years, we should have intervened less, or intervened more, or intervened differently'. This is exactly the kind of introductory cough Kissinger pioneered during the Vietnam War. Previous policy was unfortunate, he would say, in the most liberal tones, but *now* the credibility of Washington is at stake so there is no alternative but to smash the enemy. Or, as he puts it with respect to Central America: 'When our neighbours are in trouble, we cannot close our eyes and still be true to ourselves'.

○

With some reluctance I'll renew my membership of national CND. There doesn't seem much point in membership, as against a donation. It creates bureaucracy, and all you get is an occasional, dull newsletter. Last year I welcomed a members' special offer for a box of Christmas crackers and sent off a cheque. After two months I thought they'd never come, and so got a dozen at Sainsbury's. This was fortunate. Because they did arrive, although only just in time, and proved to be duds. With one exception the CND crackers made only a slight tearing sound when pulled, releasing yet another badge and some hideously unseasonable quotation from a Nato General. Had they been advertised as 'peaceful' I wouldn't have minded, because I wouldn't have bought them. Who wants crackers without a bang? With noisy satisfaction, we turned instead to the capitalist version, with their hats and jokes.

Islander

ROGER WODDIS

Caveman's Club

Four leading members of the Conservative Monday Club have resigned because of infiltration by racist extremists.

It's rotten when a minor lapse
Compels a member to resign,
And doubly hard for decent chaps
To lay their futures on the line.
But we are hedged about by foes
Who brandish figures in our face,
And we must walk on tippy-toes
When rooting for the master-race.

The day I joined the Monday Club
I knew that I was doing right,
And later, lying in my tub,
I thanked the Lord that I was white.
The trouble is the slipping polls,
And all our options now have gone;
But we shall never reach our goals
By riding on a mastodon.

To have to speak through tightened lips
Is irksome for John Pinniger,
But anyone who's had his chips
Is bound to swallow vinegar.
We dare not let the racists win,
And action now must needs be prompt —
Though if we'd never let them in,
The Club today would not be 'swamped'.

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Flash Gary

He may bring heart into American politics, but Claudia Wright doubts if he will break with the conventions of US foreign policy

Washington

LEE HART, the wife of Senator Gary Hart, once asked a professional consultant to inspect her wardrobe, analyse what she found there, recommend what ought to be discarded and choose new clothes that would convey the proper public image. This is exactly what Gary Hart has asked his advisers and pollsters to do for his ideas.

For Hart's ideas are exactly like clothes. They are worn — as lightly as possible — for effect. The only reason for displaying them is to distinguish him from everyone else in the campaign for President. The one ideological strain that links one freshly pressed idea with another in Hart's career is an amiable type of American cultism that galvanises people's grievances and resentments in a fantasy quest for a well-ordered future. In Hart's vision of that future, American military power would execute foreign intervention with precision and panache, while at home the latest in high-tech trains would run on time.

It is not true that Hart's record is unknown, or that what he stands for would require, as Walter Mondale has suggested, an FBI agent poring through Hart's writings and Senate votes to uncover. What is true is that the voters who are rallying to the Senator from Colorado don't care what he thinks, or what he has stood for in the past. For them it is enough that he is a *subliminal* candidate. He projects things that aren't there — the ghost of John Kennedy, for example. His greatest electoral asset is what he is not. He isn't Mondale, he isn't old, he isn't endorsed by the union movement, he isn't black, he isn't well-known. It may strike Mondale and his supporters as unfair to have to wage a campaign against a man who says he represents 'something else'. But there may yet be poetic justice, if Hart's campaign, magnified out of thin air by television, should ultimately challenge, perhaps even defeat the epitome of the man who isn't there, the celluloid communicator himself, Ronald Reagan.

No one should be surprised that the American political system can produce such electoral freaks and flukes. Jimmy Carter's 1976 campaign was comparable in a way to Hart's, although even the unknown Carter created a grassroots organisation that went well beyond any Hart has until recently been able to put together. Yet Hart has already opened a larger lead over the incumbent President than Carter could do at the same point in the 1976 campaign.

In judging what Hart might do in foreign policy, the most important thing is his attachment to — one might say obsession with — the US Navy. Even in this respect, Hart is conforming to the mould of the past — Franklin Roosevelt, John Kennedy and Jimmy Carter were all Navy men. And, if celluloid appearances count, so too is Ronald 'Hellcats of the Navy' Reagan.

It is another irony of the Democratic contest that Hart has stolen so many of John Glenn's clothes — which partly explains why so many Glenn voters have switched to Hart. Hart is a 'flyboy', a devotee of the naval airwing, who on visits to the Sixth Fleet has asked to fly on simulated combat missions. He is a navy jock, who in 1980 pulled strings to get the Navy to grant him a commission in the reserves without any prior military experience.

Hart has been a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee since his election in 1974. At first he sat on the Military Construction and Tactical Aircraft Subcommittees; then he backed the creation of a new subcommittee for what is called 'seapower and force projection'.

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Hart sees the world the way the US Navy sees it — as a complex of lines of communication, chokepoints, sonar arrays, missile ranges, and tactics of force projection.

The trouble with that — for the world if not for Hart's election chances — is that the US Navy is the most aggressively interventionist of all the military services represented at the Pentagon; and the least cautious in undertaking foreign policy adventures. Unlike the Army and the Air Force, which learned sobering lessons in Vietnam, or the Marine Corps, whose political consciousness has been raised very recently in Lebanon, the Navy has learned relatively few inhibitions.

The danger in a Hart presidency — like the first year of the Kennedy Administration, or the last two years of Carter — is that he could be tempted to conduct foreign policy as 'force projection'. One of Hart's informal advisers, Barry Blechman, has written a book explaining just how effective this could be, at least for 'near-term foreign policy objectives' when 'the target finds the threat credible'.* Hart is thus the candidate of the Rapid Deployment Force, the Trident-II submarine missile, and the *USS New Jersey*. His new ideas are the ideas with which the Navy and Marine Corps bureaucracies have been playing for over 30 years. All that he lacks is the modesty that comes from the experience of military failure. Even President Reagan has picked up some of that.

Hart's career in the Senate as a self-proclaimed military reformer shows a consistent pattern of clever slogans, joined with masterly presentations of technical detail. In one of his earliest Senate initiatives, Hart joined three other Democratic Senators in opposing the Ford Administration's plan to create a large US naval and air base on Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. The reasoning he used then has become the hallmark of his subsequent style. It is a lawyer's technique. 'If our goal is simply to be able to "show the flag",' Hart wrote in a joint report, 'we have that capability now, without Diego Garcia. And if our goal is actually to be able to conduct major military operations, Diego Garcia by itself is probably not sufficient'. He implied that US policy should be to look elsewhere for port facilities to match what was seen as a Soviet effort 'to expand its influence and operating capability in the Indian Ocean area'. He hinted that 'we should use this opportunity to seek firm limitations on what the superpowers will do in that region', and 'before we build a checkerboard of bases, we should exhaust diplomatic efforts'.

By putting the case for Diego Garcia in such conditional terms, Hart was able to imply opposition and support simultaneously. By recommending that the US Navy consider other Indian Ocean facilities, he cast himself in the role of a military budget cutter. By proposing 'diplomatic efforts' he struck a negotiating pose, without suggesting that the US should give up any naval deployment in order to reach a deal with the Soviet Union.

FOURTEEN MONTHS later, in August 1976, Hart had refined his technique. The purpose this time was to cut $75 million from a defence appropriation bill for the deployment in Europe of 360 Lance missiles armed with conventional explosive 'cluster bombs'. Hart made an impassioned speech on the Senate floor. He didn't challenge the nuclear-armed Lance, nor was he opposed to battlefield use of cluster bombs. Instead he argued that the 'effectiveness of the non-nuclear Lance is largely dependent on minimal misdistance' — a technical term referring to the accuracy of target location. Compared with 'Air Force tactical aircraft weapons, either airdropped or delivered by stand-off glide weapons', the non-nuclear Lance 'is not cost-effective'. If it was, Hart claimed, 'the number of missiles planned for procurement do not provide a meaningful supply... for Europe'. And even if money for more missiles were available, Hart delivered the rhetorical *coup de grace*: 'Nuclear Lance launchers will be used for non-nuclear Lance missiles... (so) when and if they time comes to use nuclear Lance missiles, we will have fewer of them'. Hart lost the argument — 15 votes to 62.

The next year, in 1977, he made his most ambitious move — the initiation of what in Washington defence circles has come to be called 'Hart's Navy'. In this scheme the US Navy would build fewer of the large, *Nimitz*-class aircraft carriers, equipped with the new F-18 bomber. Instead, it would build more, cheaper and smaller carriers, equipped with vertical and short takeoff (VSTOL) aircraft, like the British Harriers. This would save money but at the same time enable Marines to 'cover more potential troublespots'. The 'Hart Navy' would be excellent business for advocates of 'force projection'. At the same time it enables Hart to pose as a champion of arms reduction and cuts in the Reagan military budget.

Hart's preoccupation with expanding the opportunities for 'force projection' by the US Navy and the Marines, at the same time as trying to match the anti-defence spending positions of other Democratic candidates, has produced contradictions. He has switched votes on the large aircraft carriers. He has voted against more nuclear-powered submarines, but proposed oil-powered submarines instead. He has been against neutron-type artillery shells and the latest chemical munitions, but in favour of more potent conventional explosives. He has opposed the B-1 bomber, but supported the development of its successor, the 'Stealth' bomber. He has backed the Rapid Deployment role of the Marines based at sea; but has opposed land-basing for an intervention force in countries that might be politically unstable. In 1980 he voted to block the reactivation of the battleship *USS New Jersey*; in 1981 he reversed himself and voted in favour. He has made much of his opposition to the MX Intercontinental Ballistic Missile, but he supports the Trident-II sea-launched missile. He opposes the F-18 aircraft and supports the Harrier. He opposes an American-made infantry fighting vehicle, but supports an Israeli version of the same thing.

In 1982 he opposed the nuclear freeze resolution before Congress, saying it 'is not an adequate answer to the danger that confronts us'. Without identifying exactly what he thought this danger was, he threw his support to 'build down' — a plan for reducing nuclear warhead inventories as new weapons are deployed. Before the other Democrats pushed him back to the 'freeze', he offered several erstwhile new ideas — an 'update of the 1963

Ira Wyman/John Hillelson Agency

Gary Hart is a subliminal candidate. He projects things that aren't there — the ghost of John Kennedy for example

*Barry Blechman et al, *Force Without War: US Armed Forces as a Political Instrument*, Washington: Brookings 1978.

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hotline agreement', which the Reagan Administration endorsed; a 'freeze on plutonium production', which the Carter Administration had tried to negotiate in 1977; and a 'jointly staffed crisis control facility in which personnel from the United States and the Soviet Union would monitor all nuclear weapons-related activities'.

BY CONCENTRATING on military doctrine and weapons systems, Hart has largely evaded having to detail his foreign policy positions. In a Georgetown University speech last year, he proposed a 'new foreign policy' that would distinguish 'between strength and force and knows when each should be used' — a characteristic ambiguity that allowed him to reject alliances with 'tyrants', support 'human rights over military might', and yet support a combination of US bases and air and sea power for those undefined imperial needs he would rather not talk about until the nomination or the election is in the bag.

Hart has been able to follow the Pentagon and public opinion in opposing the Marine intervention in Lebanon. Over Grenada, he ducked for cover with another hypothetical: 'If the lives or safety of American citizens in Grenada were in danger... the President acted properly... if our principal motivation was political, i.e. to replace a government we didn't like or impose one we do like, then our actions went beyond acceptable bounds'. Despite a spat with Mondale over whether Cuba is a totalitarian state — Hart said no, Mondale yes — it is unclear whether or how he differs from conventional US policy.

In the Middle East he has voted consistently with the pro-Israel bloc. He has opposed arms sales to the Arab states and voted to block Congressional sanctions against Israel's attacks on Lebanon and in support of Israeli settlements in the 'occupied territories'. He led the Senate in a 1981 attempt to impose an economic embargo on Libya. Senate officials say that they can't recall a case where Hart opposed the building of any US base around the world.

When Hart was running a very close re-election race in Colorado against a Republican woman in 1980 — he won by only 19,000 votes — he tried desperately to appeal for men's votes: 'I voted with the Marines', Hart said. 'If you doubt that, ask them'. If Hart thinks that he needs the Marines in a tight election in Colorado, then he is likely to want to use them, if he becomes President. □

SOUTH AFRICA

Kitson killers

Denis Herbstein on two unsolved murders

THIS DECEMBER David Kitson is due to be released from his Pretoria prison after serving 20 years for trying to sabotage apartheid. He will almost certainly leave South Africa *permanently to live in Britain, to which he has* right of entry as a citizen.

Meanwhile, the two women who have been Kitson's links with the outside world, by regularly visiting him in prison, have both been murdered in mysterious circumstances. In both cases it is more than likely that death squads were involved.

Norma, Kitson's former wife and strongest supporter, has lived in London since 1966 together with their children, Steven and Amandla (Zulu for 'freedom'). Anonymous threats to Mrs Kitson's younger sister, then living in South Africa, persuaded her to emigrate to Australia.

When Norma left South Africa, her other sister, Joan, became Dave Kitson's main prison visitor. Like many white South Africans nervous of their radical relatives, she kept out of politics. Her role was simply to liaise between the prisoner and his London family.

In 1982 Steven Kitson went to South Africa to see his father and stayed with his aunt. Steven was arrested outside the prison in Pretoria, allegedly for sketching the building, and interrogated for five days. Hours after his release, the battered body of his aunt was found in her Johannesburg flat. The police said it was murder. But despite a reward offered by the family in South Africa, no one has been arrested.

Norma Kitson is quite sure her sister died at the hands of a freelance assassination squad. 'The government knows about their existence and connives with what they do,' she said.

The dead woman's role of prison co-ordinator was taken over by a friend of the family, Lynne Goldstein. On 21 January she was found strangled in bed in her Johannesburg home. Her British lover later appeared in court and was bailed for R1,000 (about £600). At face value this might be a crime of passion rather than political revenge. Time — and the co urt case — will tell. Maybe...

The second killing has stunned the family. Norma says she 'cannot point a finger at anybody, but it does seem a remarkable coincidence'. Though not as widespread as in Argentina or Uganda, freelance politically-motivated killing is well established in South Africa. Rick Turner, a radical academic, was shot dead through the window of his home in Durban. The killers were almost certainly off-duty policemen with access to Special Branch files. Outside the country, Joe Gqabi, the African National Congress representative in Harare, and Ruth First, in Maputo, were the latest in a steady line of outspoken opponents of apartheid to be assassinated in this undeclared war.

In the case of the Kitsons, the deaths of the prison visitors have coincided with a determined campaign in Britain for David's release. Norma and the Kitson Committee, helped by Dave's union, TASS, have mounted lengthy and provocative pickets outside South Africa House in Trafalgar Square (See *NS* 9 March). The Kitson protest has embarrassed Pretoria. Was it coincidence, or two nasty warning shots, that killed Dave Kitson's tenuous link with the outside world? □

David Kitson: 20 years in jail

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LATIN AMERICA

Banking bubble burst

Economic consequences of repaying their debts have become very dire, report Sue Branford and Teodomiro Braga

IN THE ABSENCE of a global programme for resolving the world debt crisis, an enormous burden is being placed on Latin America, the most heavily indebted of the developing regions. It is being forced not only to wrestle virtually single-handed with its grave problems but also to make an extraordinary endeavour to maintain the solvency of the big commerical banks, although all of them are based outside the region.

Conditions on the world market could scarcely be worse for Latin America — the flow of new money into the region is at a virtual standstill, world trade is still stagnant and international interest rates are still running at an absurdly high level. Yet the region has avoided a flurry of debt repudiations, which would undoubtedly have sparked off a world banking crisis, by drastically cutting its imports, so that it can still service part of its debt, and by carrying out a series of inadequate, makeshift debt reschedulings.

Because of the violent reduction in imports, the whole region is passing through one of the most serious recessions in its history. Without adequate social welfare provisions to cushion the impact, many sectors of the population are facing great hardship. In many cases, Latin American governments were forced by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) into taking these measures because the only alternative — debt repudiation and ostracism on the world market — appeared even more alarming.

The size of the burden imposed on Latin America is revealed in the preliminary 1983 report recently published by Cepal, the Economic Commission for Latin America. The report shows that the flow of foreign capital (loans and investment) into the region fell from $38 billion in 1981 to $16.6 billion in 1982 and to just $4.5 billion in 1983. This startling drop reflects the abrupt retraction in lending to Latin America after the Falklands war and the Mexican debt crisis and, to a lesser extent, the unwillingness of multinationals to invest during a recession.

The crisis into which Latin America was thrown by the unexpected drying up of foreign capital has revealed the region's alarming lack of autonomy. Its heavy dependence on external finance emerged in the mid 1970s, when many of the Latin American governments proudly proclaimed that they had discovered an effortless short cut to full industrialisation. Instead of painfully and slowly building up domestic savings, they found they could readily borrow abroad, and be thanked for doing so, for they were absorbing large quantities of the petrodollars that the commerical banks were so anxious to recycle at that time.

But by the end of the 1970s, it was clear the short cut had its snags. Many Latin American countries were borrowing abroad, not only to finance development projects — as was always stated in official documents — but also, more surreptiously, to service existing debts. The figures speak for themselves: in 1981, Latin America paid out $29.1 billion in interest on its debt and ran a trade deficit of $1.6 billion. As foreign investment was running at a low level, it was clear that well over half of the record foreign borrowing of $38 billion was handed straight back to the banks as interest payments. The debt problem was snowballing out of control. Many of the foreign bankers knew it, but, as the business was highly profitable, few raised their voices in warning.

THE BUBBLE finally burst in 1982 and the bankers, displaying their renowned herd instinct, shied away from Latin America. Many of the countries were simply unable to go on servicing their debts without fresh loans. In desperation, their government turned to the IMF. And so began the present cycle of recession.

Latin America's spending on imports fell by almost half from 1981 and 1983. It was this, and not any increase in exports, which explains the greatly enhanced trade surplus. In fact, the achievement was even more spectacular than the figures suggest, because of the continual deterioration on the region's terms of trade — the ratio between the prices it pays for its imports, compared with those it obtains for its exports. In the 1980-83 period, they were at their most unfavourable level for over half a century, running at a significantly lower level than in the 1931-33 period, the most critical stage of the great depression.

The only reason the region ran a record trade surplus was so that it could export capital to the industrialised countries. In 1982, it sent abroad $20.2 billion, equivalent to 2.5 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP), and, in 1983, $29.5 billion, equivalent to 4 per cent of GDP. This makes a mockery of the development theory by which the richer, industrialised countries are supposed to be promoting development in the Third World by sending resources to make up for shortages of local capital. Many economists in Latin America are questioning the usefulness of their integration into the world financial systems, if, rather than benefitting from capital inflows, they are being forced to send large sums abroad.

Nonetheless, this recession — euphemistically dubbed an 'adjustment' process by the IMF — is not resolving the deep-seated problems. The region's trade surplus of $31.2 billion in 1983, acquired at such cost, still fell well short of what was required to service the debt. Many of the countries only balanced their books in 1983, because, through tortuously-negotiated rescheduling packages, they rolled over part of the interest, as well as the repayments of principal. Brazil, with a foreign debt of about $100 billion, the largest in the developing world, achieved a record trade balance of $6.5 billion last year, but this was enough to pay only part of the interest of $9.5 billion which it owed.

In present world conditions, the only real solution is a long-term rescheduling, over 20 years, with interest rates fixed well below their present market rate, possibly a few percentage points above the US inflation rate. The countries will also need an initial 'grace' period of about five years, during which they make no payments of interest or principal, but concentrate their efforts on rebuilding their shattered economies.

Proposals of this kind are gradually becoming more acceptable to the more enlightened bankers, who realise their only chance of getting their money back is by giving countries a chance to build up a sound exporting sector — a process which is not compatible with a violent domestic recession.

Time has become crucial. No concrete moves have yet been taken to reach a permanent solution. Yet another year of severe recession will lead to much greater social discontent, possibly provoking political instability. At the same time, the tortuous reschedulings which many of Latin American countries have experienced over the last year are potentially dangerous, particularly if one of the big debtors is involved, for, despite the bankers' greater expertise in so-called 'crisis management', they could misfire and provoke a banking crisis. Yet historical experience suggests that the necessary reforms will only be carried out under pressure from a major upset. □

Latin America bears the brunt of the world debt crisis

	1980	1981	1982	1983
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)				
in US $s (1970)	345bn	350bn	347bn	335bn
% change (over previous year)	+5.9	+1.5	−1.0	−3.3
Per capita GDP				
in US $s (1970)	1,007	997	965	911
% change over previous year	+3.4	−0.9	−3.3	−5.6
Trade Balance (US $s)	−1.0bn	−1.6bn	9.7bn	31.2bn
Net outflows of interest and profits (US $s) (a)	19.0bn	28.1bn	36.8bn	34.0bn
Net inflow of new capital (b)	29.9bn	38.0bn	16.6bn	4.5bn
Capital balance (b—a)	10.9bn	9.9bn	−20.2bn	−29.5bn
Gross foreign debt (US $s)	205.2bn	257.9bn	289.4bn	309.8bn
Terms of trade, % change over previous year	+4.2	−7.3	−7.0	−7.2

Source: Cepal (Economic Commission for Latin America)

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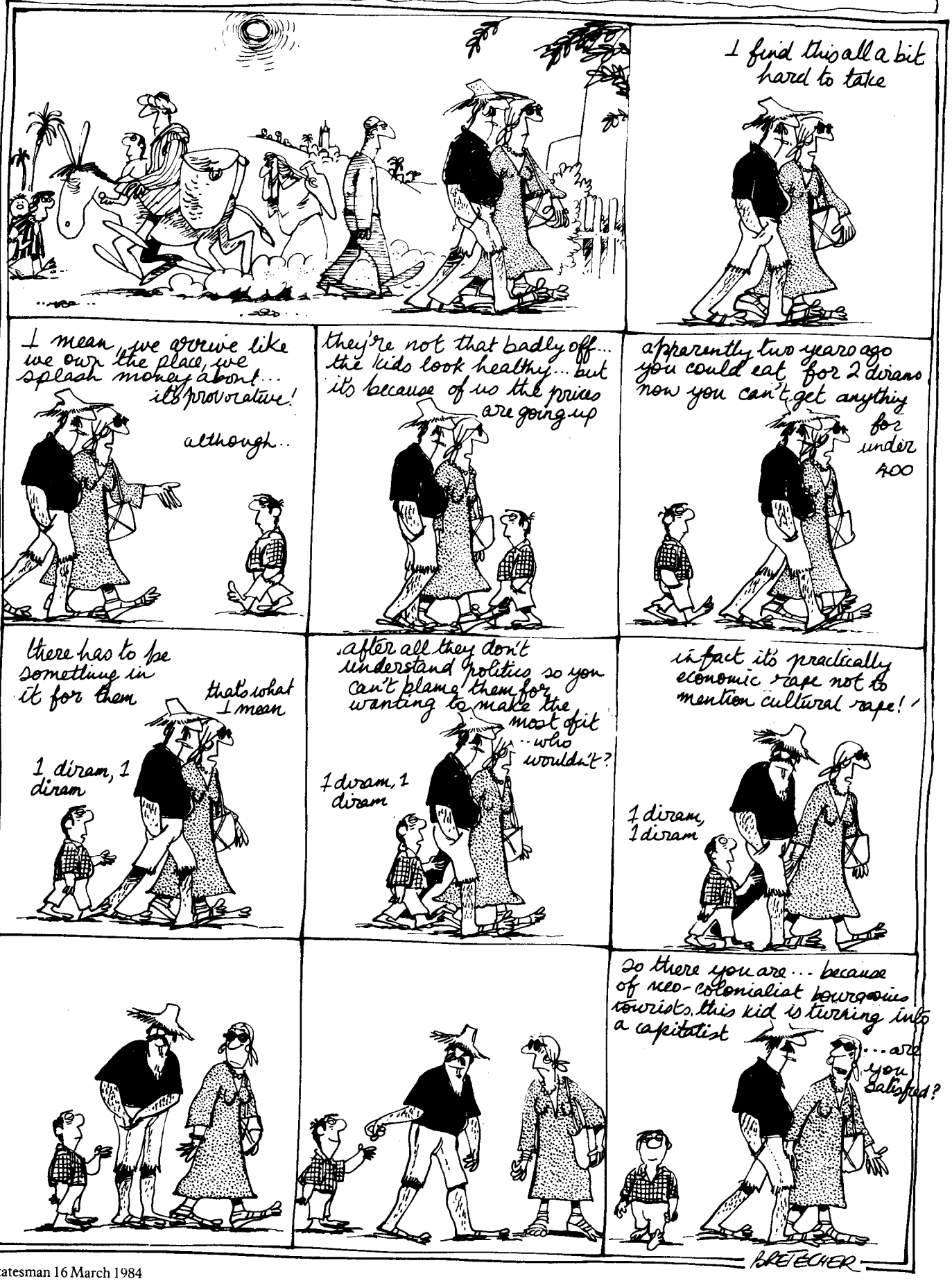
BRETECHER

WINTER SUN


I find this all a bit hard to take
I mean, we arrive like we own the place, we splash money about... it's provocative! although...
they're not that badly off... the kids look healthy... but it's because of us the prices are going up
apparently two years ago you could eat for 2 drams now you can't get anything for under 400
there has to be something in it for them
that's what I mean
1 dram, 1 dram
after all they don't understand politics so you can't blame them for wanting to make the most of it ...who wouldn't?
1 dram, 1 dram
in fact it's practically economic rape not to mention cultural rape!
1 dram, 1 dram
so there you are... because of neo-colonialist bourgeois tourists, this kid is turning into a capitalist
...are you satisfied?
BRETECHER

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LETTERS

Chesterfield puppets

D. G. Martin, Sudbury, Suffolk

I suppose it is possible that BBC news and *Newsnight* in reporting the Chesterfield by-election had no intention of manipulating the electorate by the coverage provided. It is conceivable that the issues were lost in some merely casual way because, as so often happens, a serious matter was treated as though some gladiatorial combat was taking place between inarticulate puppets who had to be labelled and libelled, represented and misrepresented by 'correspondents' and 'experts'. I doubt if I heard more than two connected sentences from any candidate involved.

I suppose, too, in assembling the *Newsnight* panel, that the team's sole thought might have been to produce an army of Emperors' Thumbs to add drama to a contest which might otherwise have been dull. And maybe they really do think that census data obtained in 1981 can be used to produce a panel which will vote in a manner typical of the population as a whole, and that the intellectual massage provided by the *Newsnight* team would cause no bias.

Yes, and perhaps in assembling their 'neutral' observers and professional 'experts' they really do think that elevation to a professorial chair involves political castration. And possibly they do think that to comment on policies advocated by candidates as though there is some mystical virtue in the middle ground, which just happens to be occupied by the Alliance, does do honour to impartiality.

But whether or not their sincerity in these matters can properly be called in question, there is no doubt at all that the content of BBC news represented a serious interference with the democratic process in Chesterfield by:

1. Treating 'minority' candidates as an irrelevance;
2. Encouraging tactical voting for the middle-ground candidate;
3. Failing to allow the candidates to speak for themselves;
4. Biased treatment of policies remote from the middle ground;
5. The reduction of an event of profound significance for this country to the triviality of a vacuous conflict between puppets, wearing labels which have no meaning outside the tabloid mentality which dominates BBC news.

I think this is serious ground for concern.

WISDOM RELIGION

A restatement of the eternal truths behind all the world's religions is contained in theosophical literature. It is a comprehensive non-sectarian, non-dogmatic religious philosophy, incorporating knowledge of Nature's inner laws and processes. All serious religious scholars and aspirants should have some knowledge of at least its basic principles.

Write for information to:

The Blavatsky Trust (B)

P.O. Box 16, London W3 6HS

Playing propaganda games

Tony Greaves, Association of Liberal Councillors, Hebden Bridge, W. Yorks.

Your article 'Liverpool Docked' (*NS* 2 March) repeats an increasingly common untruth about the position on Liverpool Council before last May. The article refers to a 'Liberal-Conservative coalition'.

The fact is that there has never been a coalition running Liverpool Council, between any of the parties. The position before last May was one of a Liberal minority administration. All the posts in the administration were held by Liberals.

There may be differences of opinion about the actions of the Liberal administration (which in the light of events since is to be seen in an ever-better light!). But to distort the true position and pretend it was a coalition with the Tories is to play the propaganda game of the Liverpool Militants.

Clarity: an ode

Lottie Miller, Fareham, Hants.

Oh to be intellectual
And understand the words
Confounding us in articles
And letters so superb!

Forty words to a sentence,
No apology for 'obfuscating',
'Unreconstructedly' 'libertarianism'
'Conflation', 'indistinction'
How very confuscating!!

Please stop this verbal garbage
Use simple words and sentences
If you have a point to make
Make sure it's *understood.*

Videos and children

O. R. Johnston, Research & Education Director, CARE Campaigns, London W1

Your reporter David Berry's account of the inception of the Parliamentary Group Video Enquiry (*NS* 2 March) is far from accurate. The organisation for which I work has no political affiliation, it is supported by Christian people of all parties and none, and by Parliamentarians of all parties. Neither I nor CARE (Christian Action, Research and Education) can fairly be called 'right' or 'left' wing. Our roots are in historic Christianity, that is all.

Secondly, the confidential paper which I wrote to set the scene for the Parliamentary Group suggested the forming of an academic working party to investigate the matter of children and video. This was done — though Mr Berry appears totally ignorant of the work of this team of University academics who advised and assisted Dr Hill.

Thirdly, as a former University lecturer myself, I have some competence in academic research. The findings of Part 1 contain all the necessary qualifications in view of its being based on an early, partial sample of the questionnaires returned. Happily, Part 2 is now out and is methodologically impeccable. Its findings confirm those of Part 1, and give details of the research techniques involved. To my knowledge the Bristol Polytechnic lecturer, to whose views you give such prominence, has never seen the research data collected by Dr Hill's team, nor examined the research techniques.

We are aware of the commercial video industry's hostility to the research, and of the money they are spending in an attempt to discredit it. But I did not think the *New Statesman* would join them in retailing these wild accusations.

Criticism or antagonism?

Alan Bold, Markinch, Fife

If there is to be any point to literary criticism then it must be more than an expression of antagonistic opinion. For that reason I was disappointed to read (*NS* 2 March) John Lucas's dismissive notice of Ronald Bottrall's collection *Against A Setting Sun* (Allison and Busby).

According to Professor Lucas 'a Bottrall poem can look so bad that you wonder how it ever managed to get into print . . . Individual poems can be plain awful . . . *any* quotation will make Bottrall look bad, laughably so.' It seems astonishing that this is the same book I recently read and reviewed in *The Scotsman.* At the age of 78 Bottrall is writing as well as ever and the evidence of his entire output reveals him as a technical virtuoso with a wide thematic range and an extraordinary imagination.

Readers need not take my word for this. F. R. Leavis's praise of Bottrall, in *New Bearings in English Poetry* (1932), is well-known but Bottrall has also been recognised as a major poet by such outstanding writers as Anthony Burgess and Muriel Spark. Professor Lucas's claim that quotation will make Bottrall look bad is demonstrably false. I therefore close with the three lucid lines that complete Bottrall's poem 'Belfast':

You put out your hand to greet a friend.
Before you can reach him
He has exploded into fragments.

SR means good business

Spare Rib Collective, London EC1

If *Spare Rib* is either losing circulation or (has) gone out of business, as Charles Landry is quoted

Mr Michael Ward — an apology

An article concerning the Bermondsey Labour Party (*New Statesman* 6 August 1982) contained references to Michael Ward and to corruption in the 1960s in relation to a public relations contract awarded by the London Borough of Wandsworth and to two construction contracts at Doddington Road, Wandsworth, and at the army camp at Catterick.

We accept that Mr Ward was not guilty of corruption in relation to any of these contracts and that he had no knowledge whatsoever of the Doddington Road or Catterick contracts. We regret that these references were published. We did not mean to suggest that Mr Ward had been guilty of corruption and we unconditionally accept that any such suggestion would be entirely false. We sincerely apologise for the hurt and embarrassment the article will have caused him and his family since publication. Accordingly, we have agreed to pay him a sum of damages and his legal costs.

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as saying (*NS* 9 March), its editorial collective are obviously the last to know. Spare Rib's sales have gone up by over 50 per cent since PDC was set up in 1976; they've stayed up despite the effect the recession is having on the magazine business in general; and, going by the last figures we saw for the *New Statesman,* aren't a million miles from your own . . .

Spare Rib isn't, and never was, a 200 copies bi-monthly affair. Although we supported PDC to its last gasp, in fact we ourselves have always depended much more on sales in newsagents through a commercial distributor (COMAG, at present). W.H. Smith were always *very* happy to stock us. *Spare Rib* remains what it always was — both a radical forum for women *and* good business for those who sell it.

Information wanted

Barrie Keefe, Half Moon Theatre, 213 Mile End Road, London E1

I am working on a new play with the Half Moon Theatre which centres on Poplar Council's rates revolt in the 1920s, and would like to hear from any of your readers who were actively involved or who have a story to tell of George Lansbury and the 29 other councillors who were jailed with him for overspending their budget. I can be contacted at the Half Moon Theatre either by post or by telephone (on 01-791-1141).

Gambling on AV

Enid Lakeman, Tunbridge Wells, Kent

Peter Kellner, in his advocacy of the alternative vote (*NS* 10 & 17 February) has not looked closely enough at either theory or practice.

The main example of AV in parliamentary elections is the Australian House of Representatives and its results are as distorted as ours. There is certainly no guarantee of majority rule there, nor can there be with single-member constituencies: anything up to half the votes cast may still be without effect because cast for losing candidates, and others because they just swell large majorities.

As for the likely effects on the British parties, one example may suffice to show how huge a gamble the alternative vote is. Suppose our three main parties were nearly equal in support and that most Labour and Conservative voters voted '2' for the Alliance candidate. The Alliance may win anything from all the seats to none, according to whether it is just second or just third in each constituency:

Labour/Con	25,000	Labour/Con	25,000
Alliance	20,000	Con/Labour	20,000
Con/Labour	15,000	Alliance	15,000

The bottom candidate will be eliminated, without having the chance to profit from any second choices. With PR, of course, each party in those circumstances would win about one third of the seats.

Peter Kellner writes: Mrs Lakeman's arithmetic is faultless. She should apply it to her favourite system, the single transferable vote. Under STV it is *possible* for a party to obtain 15 per cent of the votes, and no seats; but then it is possible to construct extreme examples to mock any system. As soon as you assume any sensible dispersion of local results around the national mean, the absurdities disappear.

Greenham van appeal

Marna Glyn, Elisabeth Nussbaum, Alan Thornhill, London SW15

Many of your readers may not realise that Greenham women camped on the northern perimeter of the base are enduring daily evictions and are living in the open. They desperately need a capacious van such as an old ambulance or transit in which to dump their gear. If any reader has a suitable vehicle to give or dispose of cheaply or is willing to help with cash for this, would they please send a cheque payable to 'Help Greenham', c/o 6 Gwendolen Avenue, London SW15 6EH. An account has been opened at the Putney Hill branch of the National Westminster Bank. Any surplus will be spent on gortex bivvy bags, of which we were able to deliver 12 last week to the peace camp.

FEEDBACK

Thatcherism without end

THE LEFT has only itself to blame for the paradox, described by John Ross (*NS* 24 February), of the long-term decline in Conservative support accompanied by the danger of long-term Conservative rule.

We suffer from two self-inflicted wounds which prevent the loss of popular support for the Conservative Party being translated into loss of office. One is now a permanent disability. The second is treatable.

Our incurable wound is the division of the Left into Labour and SDP. Only relatively few zealots, of one persuasion or another, rejoiced when Michael Foot and David Owen could not find honourable terms on which to maintain intact the coalition of socialists and social democrats. I suspect even fewer have rejoiced since 9 June 1983, when every day provides evidence from the Downing Street bunker that the alternative is hideously worse.

But it is a delusion for members of either component of the former Left coalition to think the fracture can be healed within a single party. It is equally a delusion for either component to ignore the other and try to play the old two party game with the Conservatives — with any hope of winning.

Here we come to our second self-inflicted wound, Labour's unrequited passion for the first-past-the-post voting system — a passion shared, I must add, by many of the present SDP grandees before the arithmetic moved against them.

I do not want to put yet another version for the moral case for proportional representation. A more compelling case for anyone interested in successful politics, as distinct from gesture politics, is to demonstrate why the present system more or less guarantees Thatcherism without end.

John Ross pointed out that Mrs Thatcher's 'fake landslide' was achieved with little more than four votes out of every 10 cast. More significant, I believe, is that it was achieved with the support of only three out of every 10 *entitled* to vote. Moreover the accidental distribution of Conservative, Labour, Alliance and other voters among Westminster's 650 seats allows Mrs Thatcher to slip a long way below three out of 10 before she need worry.

The Conservatives' 'fixed' vote among the electorate as a whole is probably no more than two electors out of 10 — predominantly, those rich enough to have a stake in inequality. To this fixed vote they need add only one 'variable' vote in 10 — non-Conservatives detached for one election from their customary allegiance by what the Conservatives' advertising executives call 'the big promise'.

The big promise in 1979, and again in 1983, was of course the knockdown sale of council houses. Recently Mrs Thatcher and the Centre for Policy Studies have been egging on Social Services Secretary Norman Fower — largely unnoticed and, probably, largely without success — to come up with another big promise. This time they are aiming at a minority of workers who might be persuaded they would benefit from the scrapping of company pension schemes in favour of portable personal pensions.

Hunting the big promise is an easy game for a right-wing government to indulge in, provided that it is willing to play Russian roulette with the Welfare State. Our unbalanced electroal system makes it a winning formula too. What prevents most Labour activists from complaining about the absurdities of our first-past-the-post system is the hope that next time *they* might be the beneficiaries. And so they just might — though the risk/reward ratios now built into the system seem much less favourable for them than for the Conservatives. I am saddened that it will most probably take a third term of Mrs Thatcher, no doubt elected by an even smaller minority than her present three out of 10 supporters, to persuade enough people that every vote cast should have equal value.

At least I am spared the trauma of those of my Labour friends who will have to explain to the sick and the unemployed why they choose to confer legitimacy upon a system that keeps in office a minority so selfish, wilful and downright incompetent that it could never command majority support outside the fantasy world of the House of Commons.

This surely is one wound we do not have to inflict upon ourselves. Withdraw support for the first-past-the-post system, and you can remove the legitimacy of a government which rules with the consent of only three people out of ten. But would not proportional representation mean coalition government? Yes, but all past Labour governments were unstated coalitions, whose compromises behind closed doors eventually left activists feeling let down and deceived.

I believe it is more efficient and more honest to have coalitions formally negotiated between parties, which together command wide support. Activists would be able to put down clear markers for their negotiators and would enjoy, for once, the certainty that much of their programme would actually be carried out because the continuation of the government would depend upon it.

Roger Carroll

Roger Carroll is a former SDP Director of Communications. In 1978-9 he worked as special adviser to the Prime Minister. He is currently a columnist with the Sunday Telegraph.

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Olivia Harris

The new romantics

Sex and Destiny:
The Politics of Human Fertility
GERMAINE GREER *Secker* £9.95
The Human Cycle
COLIN TURNBULL *Cape* £9.95

Camera Press

Germaine Greer: Impervious to the wealth of feminist ideas of the last decade

These books, both by well-established popular authors, have grand ambitions. One preaches a gospel, the other the human condition; the first is swashbuckling, the second verging on the effete. Both rely heavily on examples of non-European societies to demonstrate the shortcomings of the West.

Sex and Destiny, yet another book on women with a deeply offensive jacket illustration, argues passionately for a rethink on the reproduction of the human race. In Greer's argument Western society is profoundly anti-children while at the same time obsessed with coitus. Fertility is a fundamental human value, important even for those who choose not to exercise it, and should be celebrated not denigrated. Sterility is a far greater threat and curse than population explosion: not only that arising from actual sterilisation, but also from botched abortion, the virulent increase of venereal diseases and the terrible things done to women's bodies in the name of contraception.

The population lobby, according to Greer, is concerned with imposing its own anti-child ethic on the rest of the world, particularly on non-European populations. This pressure is accompanied by a reorientation of family structure away from extensive kin ties, to the detriment both of parents and of children. The conjugal bond is privileged as the primary source of gratification, and pleasure in children has been converted to treating them as disruptive intrusions into a world geared to pleasure through consumption. At the same time the burden and misery of ageing increases as reproduction falls below replacement level in some European populations.

The book is full of thought-provoking insights, and is written with the panache we have come to expect of Ms Greer. Along with the indignation come some marvellously funny passages, such as that on the perilous nightly encounter with the diaphragm. Her indictment of the anti-child culture is a powerful one, her vision of the contraception generation positively apocalyptic. Is sex worth it? she asks, in the light of the ill-health and disruption caused by the fear of pregnancy. At one level there are probably few women better qualified to ask such a question than Germaine Greer. And her proposed solutions are characteristically unconventional: for adults an unashamed celebration of *coitus interruptus* and chastity or abstention; for children and adolescents, whose rights to independent sexual exploration she still defends, she advocates a return to the condom accompanied by easy abortion.

So far so good — all these are important ideas and deserve the vigour and rhetorical skills that Greer brings to them. She is a polemicist, and perhaps we should not ask for consistency as well. She manages to steer a zigzag course through the minefield of Malthusianism, sociobiology and eugenics, and emerge more or less unscathed, by dint of some astonishing sleights of hand, and much use of selective anecdote — a mode of argument she appears to have developed through the extensive practice of after-dinner conversation. Greer has an opinion on everything; the ostensible subject of her book serves as a vehicle for the Greer line on Australian bush fires, olive oil production in Tuscany, the role of the old in promoting nuclear catastrophe. It is perhaps instructive to compare *Sex and Destiny* with the recent *History of Women's Bodies* in which Edward Shorter argued, equally polemically and selectively, that until the development of artificial contraception women were subject to their bodily functions and the attendant disease and danger, and thus were in no state to think beyond their bodies to make feminist demands. For Greer, women outside the capitalist West have been happy with their childbearing lot and thus have not needed to complain.

The book is effortlessly in tune with the times. In arguing that 'sex is a basically banal experience made more attractive by being cloaked in mystery and danger' it preaches the new romanticism. Where once Greer was the apostle of free love in as many different postures as could be devised, and of the feminist polemic against marriage, she now advocates conjugal bliss and sex geared to reproduction.

The production of new, saleable ideas under late capitalism is however premissed on amnesia. There is no reason to deny anybody the right to change their mind, but Greer's amnesia is not just a radical change of opinion. It is based on the assumption that until Germaine Greer discovered this or that truth nobody had had the wit to notice. As such the fine impulse and wicked richness of her writing become stale and remorseless. Even the author's friends are mentioned only to illustrate one ghastly error or failure after another. Neither they, nor her own past self, benefit from the generous and intelligent sympathy she shows towards other cultures, even in their more exotic and initially shocking practices.

It is curious to see, too, how impervious Greer has been to the extraordinary wealth of feminist ideas and debates of the last decade. As a result her sensibility is blunt and obtuse at the very point at which it should be at its most subtle, i.e. in the understanding of the complex web of relations between men and women, and of sexual difference itself. She appears to believe that before the advent of Western economic and ideological domination relations between women and men were harmonious and self-regulating. The struggles of non-western women, and even of working-class women in the West, to determine their own fertility are

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barely mentioned. Her general use of the male pronoun to refer to men, people, sometimes even women, and her assumption that children are boys (except when she discusses female infanticide!) is simply grotesque.

In celebrating the happy Indian family, and mourning the lost age of peasant bliss, Greer sees everything we do in the West as unnatural, self-destructive, misguided, evil, irrational or confused. To argue as she does that everything done 'in other cultures' is laudable, adaptive and in tune with fundamental human values, while berating the West, is simply an inversion of the ethnocentrism and racism that she herself decries. Imperialism is not just the imposition of foreign rule, the extraction of wealth, the campaigns to sterilise the fertility of the dominated. It is also the denial of their own history and complexity, and crass romanticism is one of the forms this denial can take.

A similarly coy view of 'other cultures' emerges from Colin Turnbull's account of the human life cycle, although his tone is wistful rather than indignant. Turnbull is an anthropologist, but his use of non-Western cultures as a vehicle for diagnosing what is wrong in our own is no more critical than Greer's, and predictably his identification of the malaise is in some respects diametrically opposed to hers. In principle Turnbull does what Greer does not, which is to include himself in the analysis; we learn about the inhumanity of his upbringing, and his socialisation into the privileged world of inter-war south-east England, along with many titillating details of life at Westminster public school, but he then retreats thankfully into the timeless, idyllic lives of the Mbuti pygmies of the Zaire forests, or a Hindu ashram, in order to salvage the fragments from a safe distance. In spite of the autobiographical base to Turnbull's account, it ends up being equally amnesiac. Not only does he seek to transcend history by simple comparison of his own life with that of the gentle, unexploitative pygmies, or the world-renouncing mystic, or even the Manhattan poor. More significantly he omits any mention of the anthropological study that brought him most directly to public notice — *The Mountain People*, an account of the nomadic Ik, a famine-stricken society in crisis. Turnbull made his name from the miserable Ik, but now chooses to ignore them and bask in the idealised glow of the eternal Other. □

LITERARY HISTORY
Rupert Christiansen

Joyce and Co

Sylvia Beach and the Lost Generation
NOEL RILEY FITCH *Souvenir* £14.95

Not again, is one's first thought: not another 'History of Literary Paris in the Twenties and Thirties', not another relentless catalogue of indulged egomania, alcoholic binges, sexual confusions and remorse over sacrificed aspirations. The 'Lost Generation' rivals Bloomsbury as the most exhaustively covered phenomenon of literary history: Hemingway, Janet Flanner, Malcolm Cowley and a score of lesser literati have all remembered, analysed or romanticised it. At this stage any new contribution to the canon needs some very strong justification.

Noel Riley Fitch's excuse is the papers of the American bookseller and publisher Sylvia Beach, but her book does not escape the charge of *déjà lu*. It is too long, repetitive and indiscriminately comprehensive. At times it drowns its subject in irrelevant detail while leaving some large questions unasked. Fortunately, its centre is a remarkable figure whose story deserves commemoration and gives a curious perspective on some over-familiar situations.

Sylvia Beach was born in 1887. Her father was a worldly Presbyterian minister, who finally settled in Princeton, where his parishioners included Woodrow Wilson; her mother was an irresponsible and restless aesthete, who killed herself after a shoplifting charge. Sylvia first came to Paris as a teenager on the family European tour, and she never again left it for long. During the war, she did voluntary work and made still-born attempts to establish herself as a journalist. There was never any question of anything for her but an independent career — 'Never let a man touch you,' her mother warned, and the advice was taken. In 1919, with the help of a little parental capital, she fixed on the idea of an English and American bookshop and lending library in Montparnasse, geared to the tastes and needs of that first wave of post-war expatriates with which she was to be so closely identified.

Shakespeare and Co., as the enterprise was called, never brought Beach much money or material comfort, but that sort of profit was not her aim: 'I am so lucky to be able to do something interesting the rest of my life,' she wrote, and she never lost her simple and quite unpretentious devotion to good writing.

From the beginning her closest ally was her French bookseller counterpart Adrienne Monnier, with whom she cohabited for over 20 years. Mrs Riley Fitch is infuriatingly vague about the psychology of their relationship. 'Eros channelled into sorority yielded both personal and literary fruits,' she comments gnomically, but neither speculates nor enlightens us further, leaving all the reader's natural prurience inflamed with a desire to know more. Nor is Monnier herself made vivid, even though she must have been a woman of some personal force.

What is more fully realised is Beach's 'literary welfare work'. As a bookseller rather than a mere amateur, her patronage of writers was practical and unstintingly loyal: she made them loans, gave them introductions, bought their books and laughed off their histrionics. Most of all, she listened to them: her instincts were sympathetic. She was 'a woman for others', as someone remarked.

No one pounced on these qualities harder than James Joyce, whose *Ulysses* Shakespeare and Co. were the first to publish in 1921 (Winston Churchill was among the earliest subscribers). At one level, daring to handle such a notoriously obscene book was a brilliant entrepreneurial coup; at another, it was a nerve-racking and draining commitment to a man who 'took freely, spent lavishly, and asked for more', yet still whined continuously about the misery of his lot. Mrs Riley Fitch charts with fresh detail the fascinating history of *Ulysses'* first ten years in public — misprinted, impounded, reviled and bought in surprisingly large quantities — and squarely presents Joyce at his most unattractive. In 1931, after eleven editions, Beach finally gave up her rights over the book, exhausted by years of juggling with a hot potato. In retrospect, Joyce expressed a little gratitude. 'All she ever did,' he admitted once, 'was to make me a present of the best ten years of her life.'

Apart from Joyce, all the other expected figures duly make fragmentary appearances, among them a Hemingway sick with nerves at the prospect of giving a public reading and Gertrude Stein, publicising her own genius and imperiously snubbing rivals and critics. Some chapters are rather too full of this sort of thing, and what is intended to provide a 'cultural panorama' becomes little more than a list of well-known Shakespeare and Co. customers and their pranks. Dramatic tension is further debilitated by the fact that Beach herself was without any real enmities, liked by everyone and trusted by most, working on a general policy of diplomatic withdrawal from potential confrontations. Even the dreadful Stein could find no reason to detest her.

The 1930s bring a certain increase in pace, however, as the dollar collapses and the freeloaders return home. For a time the shop did so badly that Beach could not even afford an assistant and further publishing plans had to be scrapped. Shakespeare and Co.'s real glory was over by 1936, when Beach was awarded the *Légion d'Honneur* and had won a fame that she did not value. She longed to retire with Monnier to a chalet in the Savoie but the literary world could not afford to let her go, and the shop closed only during the Occupation, when a Nazi threatened to confiscate her stock unless she handed over her last copy of *Finnegans Wake*. In the post-war period she co-operated wearily in the explosion of academic Joyce studies and a few years before her death in 1962 wrote a characteristically skimpy and self-

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effacing memoir. Shakespeare and Co. was bought up and now operates on the Left Bank opposite Notre Dame, staffed by itinerant American hippies and full of paperbacks, a sadly dilapidated monument to its founder.

This book packs over 400 pages with names, events and anecdotes in an attempt to fill up Beach's own quiet life and temperament. It would have had greater effect if it had had a closer focus — more art, with less matter — but at least it restores some honour to a fine bookseller and an admirable human being. □

BIOGRAPHY
Nicholas Jacobs

Marxist three-step

The Young Lukacs
LEE CONGDON *University of North Carolina*
£19.95
Georg Lukacs: Record of a Life
ed. ISTVAŃ EÖRSI
trans. RODNEY LIVINGSTONE *NLB* £15
Verso £4.95

In the autobiographical interviews which make up **Record of a Life**, Lukacs comments on the despair he felt, aged 23, when his first book won a Budapest literary prize. 'I took the view,' he says some 60 years later, apparently without any humour or self-insight, 'that society was not competent to judge the matter.' His subsequent attempt to make society more competent is the subject of these two fascinating books.

Lee Congdon's **The Young Lukacs** sets out — quoting Dostoevsky — to do for Lukacs what J.L. Talmon once tried to do for J.-J. Rousseau: 'to show how a brilliant and sensitive man "started out with the idea of unrestricted freedom and... arrived at unrestricted despotism".' Four pages later his book's major theme is said to be Lukacs's search for a female companion to make up for his estrangement from his mother. Seldom does Congdon hint at the possible links between these two themes, on which he might have developed a potent though speculative argument. He is more interested in providing the facts for his two cases to speak for themselves, and in doing this has written an admirably clear account of Lukacs's first 40 or so years, up to *History and Class Consciousness*. His knowledge of the Hungarian sources — including rare novels by Lukacs's friends in which he features as characters — his access to the Lukacs archives and his interviews with Lukacs's former colleagues, students and family make it an even more authoritative book than Michel Löwy's perhaps more brilliant *Georg Lukacs: From Romanticism to Bolshevism*.

Congdon's book is structured around Lukacs's three major female relationships, showing how neatly they coincide with three distinct phases of his development. The painter Irma Seidler came into his life in 1908, his 'Tragic' period of *fin-de-siècle* aesthetic, when he modelled himself on Walter Pater. Art for Lukacs and the élitist circle around him was bound up with suffering. Men and women symbolised incompatible worlds — 'work' and 'life' respectively — so that he perceived marriage to Irma as an impermissible threat to his work. The consequences were suitably tragic. After marrying someone else, and an unhappy affair, Irma Seidler drowned herself in 1911, a sacrifice to Lukacs's 'work', in this case his book of essays *Soul and Form*.

Congdon is outstandingly good at painting in the Austro- and particularly the little-known Hungarian cultural background of this period, and at portraits of secondary characters, like the Polanyi brothers, the extraordinary Béla Balázs and Karl Mannheim. Because he portrays Lukacs as a typical if outstanding member of a whole culture, his study is as much intellectual history as biography and enables him to elucidate Lukacs's early work and make it more readable than ever before.

The author handles what he calls Lukacs's 'Utopian' and 'Dialectic' phases with equal thoroughness and clarity. Lukacs's immersion in Dostoevsky as the opposing pole to a soulless Western positivism is related to his unlikely marriage in 1914 to the Russian Social Revolutionary Ljena Grabenko, which crowned his 'Utopian' period, leading to his isolated total opposition to the world war and his acclamation of the Russian Revolution (which he saw as a spiritual Slav uprising against the West), which in turn led him to left-wing, inevitably then Communist, politics.

This book gives the most detailed account yet of Lukacs's activity in the 1919 Hungarian Soviet Republic as Commissar for Education. Lukacs's role here seems to have been balanced and exemplary, as it was later when he was sent to the front. His 'Utopian' period was over. The marriage to Grabenko had broken down. Realism, a sense of his own and the political world's limits (however much he might sometimes misjudge them), was now his *leitmotiv*, and it was symbolised by the relationship with Gertrud Borstieber who remained his wife until her death in 1963.

If Congdon's accusation that Lukacs supported 'unrestricted despotism' seems at odds with this more balanced last phase, the interviews in *Record of a Life* unfortunately appear to make it more valid. These conversations date partly from 1969 when Lukacs was 84, and partly arose from questions about his autobiographical notes (also included in the book) in 1971, the year of his death.

The old Lukacs shows an astonishing memory and power of expression, even if his own notes do often meander oddly. He also manifests an undiminished sense of self-importance to which his Hungarian interviewer now and then panders unnecessarily.

If the charge of 'unrestricted despotism' seems more valid after these interviews, it is Lukacs's attitude to Stalin's trials and executions which make it so. Not so much his insistence that they seemed necessary at the time (the Stalin's-enemies-must-be-Hitler's-friends argument) — a position Lukacs maintained to the end — as his utter inability to talk about them as a crime and a tragedy for those involved and for the movement. Here his antinomian reflex, dating from his messianic period, that the just are guiltless whatever they do, seems to have been still alive. His interviewer lets him off the hook at this point and allows him to shift his ground at will.

This volume will be a disappointment to some because much of it concerns the strictly Hungarian aspect of Lukacs's life and work. It is important to remember that Lukacs died before the Brecht/Lukacs debate was revived and before his role in the literary politics of the Comintern had been much discussed. Nevertheless it is difficult not to feel that someone more aware of Lukacs's wider role could have got more out of him. What a pity he was not asked, for instance, about his complete silence on, and absence from, the 1934 Soviet Writers' Congress, some of whose positions, superficially close to his own, he is often wrongly seen to have promulgated. The anonymously conducted, undated *New Left Review* interview printed as an appendix only reinforces this point as it contains some of the best material in the volume. However, this unusual book is of great importance in presenting us with the only self-portrait we have of one of the great Marxist thinkers of the century. □

Robert Sheppard

Returns

Rain beats upon me the measure
of the real. Slothfully
an idiot paperboy is moving along the wet
street.
Time and again he's erased from the drafts
of my poems, but is now allowed
to stay: humping up the garden paths,
dumbly glimpsing at rolled headlines
between houses. It is spring.

You step into the poem, slide
between its cool sheets. When I'm with you
I think about the poem. But when I'm
writing I'm thinking of you
as palpable as memory, somewhere
the other side of sense. The touch
of your hand
becomes almost a memory as you enter
a blank scenario. The idiot paperboy
with the orange bag of evening
papers, leaves the poem.

What is this rainbow, or that
twin rainbow we saw
one confused afternoon, but a wonder
of discriminations cutting
upon a knife-edge of sunlight, trained
in the self-evidence of a beautiful day. Spring
moves toward summer
as day pulls away the rind of dusk.
Public persons return to become private
people again.

You come into the room and the poem follows
to where private words
are found sheltering in cramped parentheses
like spoons in bed, making little sense.
Pausing before the curtain you watch sudden
rain
striking out the day, a speckled impression
on the window.

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Taking it Like a Woman

ANN OAKLEY *Cape* £7.95

Venturing outside the safer confines of the feminist sociological research on which her reputation has been founded, Ann Oakley enters the realm of the personal. Her eighth book opens with a list of questions that escalate from 1) What makes someone into a feminist? to 4) What is the nature of the love between men and women? and 5) How do we deal with the fact that we are not going to live for ever?

She writes assuredly, honestly, at times with vivid urgency, building a complex narrative of feeling that blends first-person memoir and third-person fictions with polemic and personal declarations. Her quarry is an understanding of those predicaments that stem from her femaleness, but too much is simply taken for granted about other determining factors — her background (as the daughter of the eminent Richard Titmuss), her education and a host of particular circumstances that have shaped the person she is.

One result is that the classic female crises she undergoes (a breakdown at 18; severe post-natal depression) seem solely to do with not *knowing* what she wants. Intense emotional conflicts revolve around the men in her life: father; husband; a lover who inhabits the feverish clichés of a fictional grand passion (enacted in airports and hotel bedrooms). But these are alternately evoked and denied, as is the emotional baggage of motherhood. Her biggest source of satisfaction is in her three children, but it's an intellectual irritant — why can't her books mean more? she fumes. So many feminine dilemmas seem to have been outstripped; the outcome is success in the world, a marriage whose arrangements give her freedom, security and the joys of childrearing without unequal burdens.

Certainly it's an enviable sort of life, lived on her own terms — up until the point where two miscarriages, then the onset of cancer, force her into the uncomfortable reflections with which the book begins. By the time it ends, she is caught in a dizzying spiral of contradictions that finally vanish into a cosmic question mark.

What is also contradictory is that, in laying bare her own complexities and translating these into polemical generalisations, Ann Oakley has discounted the multidimensional character and range of women's experience. Yet she has done us a service: by acknowledging the fears and desires that can't be accommodated in an ideologically tidy world, that need room to spill out if our lives are to keep changing.

Liz Heron

The Nuclear Delusion: Soviet-American Relations in the Atomic Age

GEORGE F. KENNAN *Hamish Hamilton* £12.50

Shadows of Hiroshima

WILFRED BURCHETT *NLB* £15 *Verso* £3.95

There are some contradictory elements in George F. Kennan's new book. An early advocate of 'containment', Kennan is today dismayed by the 40-year military partition of Europe which has been its consequence. Regarding any use of nuclear weapons as morally outrageous, he nonetheless countenances a provisional state of deterrence. He reiterates the need to lessen NATO's nuclear dependence, yet acknowledges (in the *Introduction* to this collection of writings and speeches) that he now believes it insufficient to eliminate particular weapons: 'war itself . . . will have to be in some way ruled out'.

Such contradictions inhere in the bitter historical and military facts, and need not be taken as authorial failings: these reflections of an eminent American liberal are worth reading. But Kennan's liberalism does imply certain limitations. He is unable to see that his country's military dispositions may reflect, not a misplaced effort at defence, but an aggressive pursuit of hegemony. Here, the late Wilfred Burchett's *Shadows of Hiroshima* is a useful corrective. Burchett's was the first authoritative and uncensored dispatch from the ruins of Hiroshima. Blending this first-hand knowledge with subsequent research and reading, he argues that the later stages of the A-bomb project, including the Japanese bombings, were conceived as the first steps in a post-war diplomacy aimed at using the nuclear threat to overawe the Soviet Union.

Unfortunately, Burchett, too, has his symptomatic silences. These grow deafening as he moves from Japan to Europe. His condemnation of US and British interference with the 1946 Greek elections and his depiction of reckless American militarism at the time of the Berlin blockade must lose force when they are accompanied by the blandest reticence about Eastern Europe: there is no discussion of the post-war Stalin purges, of the establishment of communism in Czechoslovakia or of the Hungarian uprising. It's a pity that these silences diminish one's appreciation of a compassionate and urgently felt book.

M. H. Ryle

Growing Up

RUSSELL BAKER *Sidgwick & Jackson* £9.95

This autobiography of *New York Times* columnist Russell Baker is one of the most engaging written in recent years, witty, philosophical and stylish.

Baker was a boy of the depression years whose father died of diabetes. Together with his mother and sister, Baker shifted from one difficult strait to another. To make ends meet he was later a Baltimore newspaper boy. The landlord whose house they lodged in moonlighted as a mortician and kept the freshly dead awaiting his attention in the entrance-hall.

Baker's world was full of ordinary but, in his pen, entertaining provincial Americans, who made the most of a bad lot in life. He has a fine gift for the most telling phrase: he made his typewriter 'rattle like a machine-gun'; south of Coral Gables, mosquitoes were constantly 'tattooing the back of my neck'. But then it ran in the family: his uncle Hal told him, 'Eating that fried chicken is like digging your grave with your own teeth.'

Russell Baker emerges from this book as a warm, amusing person with a sharp eye for the details of ordinary life. It is a pleasure to read.

Brian Martin

Home and Dry: Memoirs III

ROY FULLER *London Magazine Editions* £8.95

One night in 1941, L/AF(DF) Fuller en route for Kenya — theatre of the absurd rather than of war — was lying in his bunk on a troopship, thinking and scratching, when he heard the thump of depth charges in Freetown Harbour. And that, for the future Professor of Poetry at Oxford, was that. No more thumps; no more excitement; not much more action of any sort. His account is all in the telling, and hardly at all in the tale of his journey to, and sojourn in, East Africa, and of his return, as an 'enfeebled supernumary', to undertake naval duties of an unspecified nature in Lower Regent Street.

In this, the third volume of his autobiography, he treats of the disruption of war in the lives of those of military age — not excepting the Thirties poets, to whose wholesale avoidance of the call-up he sardonically alludes. He describes his own metamorphosis as being from a puritan lefty to someone who was, at least for a time — the qualification is of his essence — less narcissistic. Although experiencing 'blankness of depression, not excluding thoughts of suicide', he is sustained by 'the poet's blend of gormlessness and overingenious subtlety' and a character compounded of the soft centre delineated in *Souvenirs*, now stiffened by intellectual snobbery. And of course by books, from which he admits to obtaining most of his impressions of the Dark Continent, Margery Perham, rather than the sight of Kilimanjaro obscured by mist, being his principal impresario.

Home and Dry is a marvellous evocation of the generally unpublicised miseries of war: boredom, separation and the subjugation of self to the machine. Its elliptical and laconic style, a far cry from the author's first dim attempts at literary creation recorded in *Vamp till Ready*, is a vehicle well-suited to his stoical conclusion: that most episodes in life require one simply to soldier on.

Bruce Hepburn

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FICTION
Angela McRobbie

Strangled cries

Loose Connections
MAGGIE BROOKS *Chatto* £7.95 & £3.50
Every Move You Make
ALISON FELL *Virago* £9.95 & £3.95
The Annunciation
ELLEN GILCHRIST *Faber* £2.95

I have in front of me three novels by women — and I find all three exceptionally difficult to write about. This is because each engages with issues which are, and have been, central to feminist politics over the last ten years. To confront these as a critic is to risk guilt and bad faith. It also means putting oneself on the line. I've picked these books up, pondered over them, read them and put them down. In a nutshell, I admire the intentions but have little feeling for the sensibilities they portray.

Each is fashionable, yet quite remarkably old-fashioned. There is little sharpness, little challenge, little energy. Kathy Acker they are not. They almost slump towards a conclusion. And this is not, I should add, a fault of their writing. In this sense they are careful and accomplished. Instead, it is a direct result of the conventions and narrative structures employed throughout. The use in all three cases of 'popular forms' leads inexorably to political compromise, or else to making a quick exit in the closing pages.

This wouldn't matter so much if the tenor were not, from the start, established as recognisably *political*. If anything, these novels show how difficult it is to escape the stranglehold of form. It standardises and controls content; it makes these pieces of writing read like straightforward love stories; it makes them into soap. This would be fine if they possessed the over-the-topness, the melodrama and absurdity of *Coronation Street, Crossroads* or Mills and Boon. But inevitably the important, or at least semi-serious nature of the content, clashes with the formal features — it makes it difficult to laugh.

All three take up the question of female desire and attempt to express aspects of this desire in a popular format. But where Jackie Collins makes it randy and Barbara Cartland makes it sweep you off your feet, these authors beat uncomfortably about the bush. In **Loose Connections** the man in question is a modern-day lovable rogue. He's a bit of a *Jackie* hero, too, a working-class football fan with crinkly eyes who worms his way into a jeep driven by a London feminist-about-town who is on her way to a conference in Munich. He plays it safe by wearing a gay badge, but the two quickly find themselves drawn to each other.

Alison Fell's portrayal of women's desire is at once more poetic, more disturbing and more difficult. I found **Every Move You Make** terribly depressing to read. It's a personalised, fictionalised account of libertarian London in the early to mid '70s. Squatting, demonstrating, flyposting and Rock Against Racism form a backdrop against which the deeper questions of love and sexuality, motherhood and work are played out.

The novel is focused around June Guthrie, a Scottish working-class woman who, during these years, finds herself drawn into and absorbed by the London communal-living scene. *Every Move You Make* is written almost in a diary form and bravely invites the reader to make autobiographical connections. At least, that is how it presents itself to me, and that is also why it presents any reviewer with immense problems — as though to be critical would also be to criticise, from whatever position, a whole way of life.

As a novel it moves backwards and forwards in time, where time is almost wholly punctuated by the heroine's string of left-wing lovers. Towards the end she moves in and out of a breakdown, but this, too, is hard to pin down because it is so closely tied to the battling out of desire, needs and misunderstandings which mark the relationships so painfully drawn out. At this point, my sympathies evaporate. If these men have so little to offer, why does the heroine spend so much time waiting for things to get better?

Of course, there is a shadowy friendship always there in the background, but even June's closeness to Vi is continually defined and determined by and through their various men. Other women flit in and out, troubled and, as often as not, depressed. There is little hint of the breaking of the chains around traditional relations and emotions that feminism promised and continues to promise. It's not a question of making depression, pain, suffering, desire and need redundant, but at least of breathing new life into them.

There is a smugness which works its way through both this book and Ellen Gilchrist's **The Annunciation**. In both, the fragile position of the main woman character pushes her into a consistently arrogant assumption of being in the right place at the right time. For the outsider, Fell's London remains cliquish and impenetrable. It is characterised solely by a set of signs, slogans and dispositions. And even within its own terms it lacks argument, disagreement and political debate. Gilchrist's account of privileged, white, middle-class life in the Deep South is equally without critical edge. Amanda McCarney is a bright kid in a claustrophobic marriage. From this she manages to escape and finds herself a place in an equally privileged academic community. *The Annunciation* is written with a frantic, even desperate, vanity. Amanda continually reminds the reader of her immense beauty and personal attractiveness — even when she isn't doing this for herself, the other characters do it for her. Like June Guthrie she, too, is a struggling writer, but in this case the American Dream pushes her towards becoming, as she puts it, 'the real thing'. Eventually her James Taylor-like young lover takes his guitar with him and leaves her pregnant and middle-aged.

It's ironic that in both these novels, *The Annunciation* and *Every Move You Make*, joy and pleasure erupt momentarily in the closing page, and in each case are produced by either the real presence or the future prospect of a child. □

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ART
John Spurling

Symbol minded

Tate Gallery

Dante Gabriel Rossetti's iconic *Monna Vanna*

The Pre-Raphaelites
Tate
William Morris Today
ICA

Just over 20 years ago Victorian art was nowhere. 'The period,' writes Jeremy Maas in a collection of essays called *Pre-Raphaelite Papers* (Tate/Allen Lane £12.95), 'was like a page torn from a history book and lost to view.' Since then the process of rediscovery has steadily gathered pace, so that it begins to look in retrospect like an underground stream secretly leading all the time to the dark dammed valley of Mrs Thatcher's Neo-Victorian age. Nothing could be more appropriate to where we are now than the Tate's grand Pre-Raphaelite exhibition, the most comprehensive ever held. Sponsored by Pearson and accompanied by a mighty catalogue (Allen Lane £25, Penguin £10.95), the exhibition is laid out chronologically and includes drawings and watercolours as well as all the best loved and best hated paintings.

In certain ways the original Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (Rossetti, Millais and Holman Hunt plus four lesser fry) were radicals. They were opposed to the established art scene, they wanted both more realism and more serious meaning in the visual arts and they substituted for Post-Raphaelite shadows a dazzling technique (used by the Flemish primitives) of painting bright colours into a white wet ground. To begin with they certainly fluttered the establishment, notably Dickens (who wrote a famous diatribe against Millais' *Christ in the House of His Parents*). Their painstaking realism — which extended to the outdoor recording of nature and its smallest details, to the use of real people (often each other) as models, and to the preference for compositional and perspectival awkwardness over artificially contrived smoothness — was comparable to and contemporaneous with that of other rebels and innovators abroad, especially the arch French troublemaker, Courbet. Indeed when one reads a book like *The Art of the Nineteenth Century* by Robert Rosenblum and H.W. Janson (Thames & Hudson £25), offering a fresh, well-articulated and panoramic view of a period which we have so far only been able to see piecemeal, the Pre-Raphaelite movement appears as an important emanation of the revolutionary spirit of Europe in the 1840s.

The trouble is the Brotherhood's penchant for meaning. Since realism is never, of course, reality, but only reality interpreted, it must always have some meaning, even if partly unconscious, but the Pre-Raphaelites milked meanings, planted meanings, sowed and reaped meanings as if they were Stalinist Five-Year planners or capitalist factory-farmers, as if the sole purpose of reality were to serve for sermons. The most blatant preacher is Holman Hunt whose paintings are also, in spite of the bright colours, the least sensually pleasing, with a strained, scratchy look, the sort of shallow literalness practised in this century by Social Realists. And this, in effect, is all there is to Hunt: the programmed meaning which might as well be uttered from a pulpit in words but is here translated into a visual illustration, a setting, props and figures which symbolise simple aspects of the Christian faith (*The Light of the World* and the even more soapy *Scapegoat*), of Christian morality (*The Awakening Conscience*) or, rather more obscurely, the defenceless state of the country against foreign invasion (*Our English Coasts*, with a flock of sheep gathered on a cliff-top) and the dangers of sectarianism in the English Church (*The Hireling Shepherd*). There is neither enough interest in the details to drown the insistent message nor enough conviction in the message to animate the visual experience. Even if you are inclined, in a more apparently complex painting such as *The Hireling Shepherd*, to wander away from the organised party, as it were — to relax into the Arcadian scene or to concentrate on the sexual encounter between shepherd and girl — Hunt's voice calls you harshly back. The superficiality of his realism and the obtrusiveness of his symbols allow no true freedom of interpretation.

MILLAIS, BY contrast, is a real artist. He naturally creates an alternative world, an imaginative place for the viewer to enter and temporarily inhabit. *Mariana* is a powerful and wholly pictorial evocation of sexual frustration, boredom and claustrophobia, in which the very richness of the colours and the materials they describe (velvet, stained glass, embroidery, polished oak) works to intensify the sense of deprivation and imprisonment. Mariana herself is equally ambivalent. Her pose — head and shoulders drawn back, hands on hips — is at once sexually provocative and sympathetic. If you enter the picture to take advantage of her, you remain there to understand what *she* feels like. But Millais seldom painted at this level. Most often he went through the technical motions and settled for sentimentality instead of emotion, costume drama instead of history, actors instead of humans. He had, it seems, little courage and only a commercial ambition.

The leading spirit of the original Brethren and the connecting link, through his influence on Morris and Burne-Jones, with the second generation of Pre-Raphaelites was Dante Gabriel Rossetti. He is a rather clumsy painter, with a very narrow range, but his obsession with a certain type of woman and especially her hair, lips, clothes and ornaments gives his work an initial impact which is strong and disturbing. Not for long. He does not explore or illuminate his sitters, but makes icons of them, proposing in fact an alternative, female-worshipping religion which is distinctly more stifling if somewhat less banal than that offered by Hunt's *Light of the World*. Rossetti's principal follower, Burne-Jones, continued his master's religion of womanhood, transforming it into a wispier, more spiritual, more equivocal kind of worship, but his little caricature sketches of his friend Morris have more energy than anything he did in paint.

The best paintings in the exhibition are nearly all by those who were not true members of the Brotherhood, though closely connected with it. Arthur Hughes is a sentimentalist, but his work, like certain popular novels or TV series, holds consistently and skilfully to its own

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narrow track. Ford Madox Brown's *The Last of England* and *Work* are certainly sermons, but unlike Hunt's paintings they are passionate demonstrations of the social evils they attack, not dry textual illustrations. In Mrs T's Britain of 1984, in which the inept moralising of Hunt, the castrated imagination of Millais and the self-absorbed fantasies of Rossetti all seem freshly irritating, Brown's *Work* looks truer than ever. William Dyce's *Pegwell Bay* is always counted with Pre-Raphaelitism and it has of course the sharp detail and some of the inserted meaning that the true Brethren went in for, but it is really too complex and reticent a masterpiece to qualify for this exhibition, except as some kind of absolute standard by which to judge the glossy pusillanimity that mostly surrounds it.

William Morris, represented at the Tate by his only completed oil, *Queen Guenevere*, was no painter and only initially a Pre-Raphaelite, but is emerging more and more these days as a great Socialist. The exhibition at the ICA celebrating his 150th anniversary is a disappointing one, very much more of a sermon than a visual experience and like most sermons only really palatable to the converted. The idea is to relate Morris to the present day, but the book accompanying the exhibition (ICA £6.95), with short essays by many hands, does it a great deal better. I remain doubtful, however, whether forward with Morris is any answer to backward with the Pre-Raphaelites. □

TELEVISION
Hugo Williams

Without Tracy

NOSTALGIA is traditionally green on TV. There's so much of it about it's a wonder the green doesn't wear out before the other colours, or turn to mud from all the tears that are shed over it, mine included. For instance, I already feel nostalgic for M.J. Read's play **Waving at Trains** (BBC-2) in which someone goes back to the scene of a childhood picnic in the Fifties when he was nine.

We see the old Fifties bus trundling into the countryside, the little family descending, walking, then the modern version of the bus, with the narrator on board, following them. He never catches up with the family and overhauls them, as he might in a modern play or Hamlet, but he is there on the poppied hillside, overhearing with the weepy hindsight of adulthood the struggles of his widowed mother to meet his and his sister's demands, so innocent and yet so brutal in their effects. The sister wants to go to a Milk Bar and wear lipstick. The boy wants to go to boarding school. The mother is the classic soppy-stern model of the period, trying to be all things to her distintegrating brood. 'I'm not having you walking the streets like a harlot,' she says. 'Oh Christ, let them go, let them go,' cries the man, but she cannot hear him. 'It was all such fun when I was married,' she mourns, as the boy waves and the train passes.

Now we are aboard the train, watching and waving with the man at a little trio in sun hats and sandals waving from a sunlit hillside. The train enters the tunnel (of time) and we are looking back at a little splash of green as it recedes again into the past. Why am I such a sucker for this kind of thing?

Another curious trio appeared in **Demelza's Baby** (BBC-2). 'We feel very normal here,' said a woman called Judy, in case we thought this was Rosemary's Baby Part 2. 'All our friends are married couples, all our talk is about having and bringing up children.' The only difference being that it wasn't Judy who was having the baby here, but her girlfriend Demelza. 'It's something the three of us have done,' she said with a visionary calm, leaving it open as to which three exactly. 'I haven't told my GP yet,' said the pregnant one. 'He wanted to know why they were making a film about a perfectly ordinary woman... I would have told him, but the midwife was there.' I thought it might have been better if they'd both got pregnant. It looked too much like a mock couple with the 'feminine' one having the baby. I must say my heart warmed to the beautiful Judy who seemed so genuinely chuffed by events. 'I've got things to do but I just want to dance and tell people we've got a little boy and he's OK and he hasn't cried yet.' Quick-witted too: Did she see Morgan as her baby? 'No, my Morgan.'

It's hard to imagine a documentary about most poets being as much fun as the one about John Cooper Clarke: **Ten Years in an Open-necked Shirt** (C4). When John was a kid the only thing on daytime telly was racing and he claims his breakneck style of delivery is derived from Richard O'Sullivan's. 'I had a sick childhood, but it didn't bother me. I've never been the outdoor type.' A further indoor type it would be hard to imagine than this red-legged scissor man in Dylan hair and shades. A close friend of Elvis Costello, he has a similar taste for word-play ('The captain disappeared without Tracy') and alliteration ('Nubile nihilists of the North Circular'), but I liked his titles best: 'I mustn't go down to the sea again', 'I married a monster from outer space.' Given the chance to deprecate his work as doggerel or Stanley Holloway-type monologue, Clarke declined. And why not? But if this stuff's poetry, what's the other called? 'How much does a poetic licence cost, John?' '£30 for a black and white, £60 for colour.'

Sukiyaki and Chips (C4) seemed appropriately lost among the Tokyo subcultures. 'I used to be a Hell's Angel,' said one doll, 'but I've given it up for rock 'n' roll' (dances the twist). 'Lollipop music by the awful Goodbyes is processed like cornflakes,' said a girl, while, 'It is every schoolgirl's fantasy to be a real live lollipop star,' said another. 'What is the point of doing it if you have to compromise?' said a member of the lollipop band Yellow Magic Orchestra, who compose their computerzac lounging around the office. 'Tootle tootle tootle', went their latest smash, leading you to wonder what a compromised version of the song would have sounded like.

'Of course, we are all TV and video fans,' said a publican. 'We like to keep up with the latest technology and show the latest video and laser discs to keep our customers drinking longer.' Another delaying device is the backing tape, to which emboozeled patrons are encouraged to put their own slurred vocal tracks at four in the morning, while watching emotive videos of kamikaze raids: 'Now everyone has a chance to be a star,' said the publican.

Faced with the total unacceptability of classical Japanese music to Western and Japanese ears alike, one scientist and his oscilloscope have come up with the idea that you have to listen to it with the other side of the brain from Western music — a novel accomplishment. 'This is the reason why Japanese people have a special feeling for silence,' he thought, although an alternative explanation might be that, on balance, silence is a more attractive prospect than some classical Japanese compositions. To hear one girl at work on the bells and gongs was to agree that 'even the sound of cooking Sukiyaki makes wonderful vibrations in the air'. The most seriously convincing artist in the film was a man who could play the trombone while balancing it on his lips. Not only that, but he could pull a string and a tiny Japanese flag rose to the top of his upraised instrument. This was a genuinely Japanese achievement. □

FILMS
John Coleman

Soap flakes

Terms of Endearment (15)
Empire
Love Streams (15)
Premiere, Shaftesbury Avenue
Never Cry Wolf (PG)
Classics, Haymarket and Chelsea
Vertigo (PG)
Electric Screen, Portobello Road; Plaza

Shirley MacLaine can still flash that dazzling, urchin grin — pure mischief — which pixily charmed as far back as *The Trouble With Harry* — and the saving grace of great talent brought by Debra Winger to *An Officer and a Gentleman* once again keeps breaking through, but neither of these super actresses is given much to make sense of in James L. Brooks's first feature, **Terms of Endearment**.

As mother and daughter in a fragmented, 132-minute affair currently up for 11 Oscars, they bicker their way down the years, from daughter Emma's briefly glimpsed nursery days, through mother Aurora's near-instant widowhood, right down to the death of Emma, by now herself mother of three, of cancer. The

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effect is less that of a family album having its pages turned (all human life is here: a laugh, a tear, and so on) than of episodes from quite different TV soaps cut scattily together, without regard for everyday coherence or emotional continuity. For this, Mr Brooks — with an interesting if chequered track-record in scripts for such television shows as *Lou Grant* and *Taxi* as well as for Pakula's *Starting Over* — must be held wholly responsible. He not only produced his directorial debut, but wrote it, too, at some remove from a Larry McMurtry novel, incidentally mixing in a new character, Garrett, a foul-mouthed, priapic and paunchy ex-astronaut, next-door neighbour in Houston to Ms MacLaine's Aurora. As played by the unnerving Jack Nicholson, he seems to have wandered in from another set — not just another garden — and quite gooses *Terms of Endearment* to bits.

It would always, of course, have been 'bits', even without his disruptive and bum-hugging vulgarity. Maybe it is the unhinged re-runs of familar themes and episodes from all over that have elsewhere drawn Pavlovian drools of approval from those Academy Award voters, salivations rather salutations. How else to explain acceptance of poor Shirley MacLaine, rich Boston-raised widow with a comical cluster of aging suitors, wandering around in flouncy and horrific off-the-shoulder frocks while asked to act prim-steely towards sexual advances (till the advent of Nicholson, when she melts with equal implausibility) and to be wilfully *grande-dame* about daughter's wedding to a nice-seeming young EngLit teacher? 'You are not special enough to overcome a bad marriage,' she spits. She and enchanting Debra Winger quarrel ritually, one feels, to provide occasions for merriment, telephones, anger and reconciliation. And there is a posh girl-chum, materialising from the past, to give dying Debra/Emma a New York interlude and an appalled, would-be comical experience of her career-women clique. And there is the mutinous, mixed-up elder son Tommy, sufferer from wayward parents. And there are funny lines and there are hurtful lines and there are philosophical lines; and they are all, quite woefully, crossed.

One sickens, somewhat, of America's toy self-flagellation over the awful problems of affluence, its public playing with private parts and pain all too common among the poor. To date, John Cassavetes has been a maverick director, a risk-taker most admirable (as in *Husbands, Minnie and Moskowitz, Opening Night* and *Gloria*) when the risks — of semi-improvisation, an unusual rawness of feeling, an unsettling candour caught on camera — paid off without too much ado. His **Love Streams** has sketchy affiliations with the Brooks outing, in that the Berlin Film Festival has already seen fit to give it top prize, the piece runs at 130-plus minutes and it has a free-form structure. It is also mind-numbingly dreadful. Cassavetes struts his snarling, Mr Punch profile through a nonsense role of alcoholic writer, hugely successful, with a gang of groupies and apparently inexhaustible wallet; his marvellous real-life wife and recurring star, Gena Rowlands, does another of her nostril-pinched nutters as a divorcée prone to screened fantasies. She turns out to be his sister, around reel six, when Gothic and Thurber — surely unwittingly — come together, as the desperate siblings do, to furnish stormy weather, ludicrous dialogue and a Francis Bacon last, arty shot.

After which, **Never Cry Wolf**, a Disney picture directed by Carroll Ballard whose startlingly good *The Black Stallion* should not be confused with its sequel mismanaged by someone else, breezes in as a wholesome, Arctic reviver. Bespectacled weed Tyler (Charles Martin Smith) finds himself dumped down in Northern Canadian wastes, amid crates that include a shrewd supply of strong beer and lab alcohol as fortifier. His diary-overheard mission is to see if wolves are responsible for the gradual wiping out of the caribou. Apart from the staggering location photography (by Hiro Narita) of snow-scapes, animals at home in man-free vastness, there are respectably old-fashioned hair's-breadth escapes and thrills: Tyler emerging from a rackety biplane, Tyler miraculously surfacing after falling through ice. His strictly experimental diet of mice — stewed, skewered, in toasted sandwiches — affords stomach-churning light relief, as well as a firm hint of the obsessional, which is to drive him to mystical identification with the spirit of the place, rejection of speculators' values, a bond with a knowing old Inuit, or local sage. This is a very nice, brilliantly made yarn with a moral, or morals: cleansing.

At doughty Romaine Hart's refurbished Electric is to be found Hitchcock's 1958 **Vertigo**, long out of sight and never too much on my mind: a con-trick amiably performed by and on James Stewart as an acrophobic San Francisco ex-cop. His slurred, stammering drawl serves the frankly dizzy tale as perfectly as do Kim Novak's mouthing and maskily *maquillé* motions. □

THEATRE
Rosalind Carne

Resonant obsessions

The Aspern Papers
MICHAEL REDGRAVE *Haymarket*
Two Can Play
TREVOR RHONE *Theatre Royal, Stratford East*
Old and New Chestnuts
and
Salute to Dr Johnson
JOHN SESSIONS *King's Head*

Passion for inanimate objects lurks at the heart of all Henry James's writing. What makes him not only morally acceptable, but, in my view, the most exciting late-19th-century novelist writing in English, is his consistent recognition of the tragic consequences of that passion. His short story, 'The Aspern Papers', is a particularly poignant example for the objects in question are the letters of a dead poet and their value is not merely financial, but also personal and literary.

The tale was inspired by a young man's successful quest to win the confidence of a former mistress of Lord Byron, in order to extract material for a book. James created his own poet, Jeffrey Aspern, a fellow American and therefore a symbolic beacon of culture in a country that still looked to Europe for its identity.

Beautifully constructed, the story is a gift to the stage, with its layers of intrigue and deception and its atmosphere of faded beauty, given physical expression in the person of Aspern's muse, the ancient Juliana Bordereau, and in the decaying Venetian palazzo where she lives with her peculiar niece, Miss Tina. Michael Redgrave's adaptation is a fine piece of work, transposing all the suspense of the original and avoiding any discrepancy between the author's own dialogue and the inevitable additions. It has been seen before and is well served here in Frith Banbury's thoughtful revival with its superb design by Carl Toms.

James wrote, 'I waited upstairs in the long dusky sala where the bare scagliola floor gleamed vaguely in the chink of the shutters.' Toms has responded with a set of bold perspectives, and with muted browns in which the shape and texture of light is accorded the same care as the structure of doors and windows.

The casting is interesting and its results surprising. I was prepared for presence, but not for the depth and detail of Christopher Reeve's protagonist, Henry Jarvis. Standing and sitting with the deliberate formality of a Victorian portrait, his size will always make him something of a Superman, but in this case his charisma is charged with a ruthlessness that is both repellent and fascinating. Miss Bordereau, his female adversary, is as strong-willed as she is tiny and frail, and she gets formidable treatment from Wendy Hiller. Physically helpless and confined to a wheelchair, she is also mentally alert to the point of ferocity, countering his brazen curiosity with an angry suspicion that comes to a head in a moment of wild theatricality as she hurls her dying body across the floor in an effort to save her beloved papers.

Between these two powerful egos hovers the vague, cloistered and unworldly Miss Tina, speaking, according to James, with 'a kind of mild literalness'. Vanessa Redgrave perfectly captures her gestures and voice and the sense of wasted innocence, but she somehow fails to capture the essence of a human being in whom we can believe. This is a hazard of her enigmatic role and, as she falls in love with the handsome

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visitor, emotions become more pronounced and the interpretation takes wing.

Toby Robins provides strong support as the poised, worldly, but ultimately sympathetic Mrs Prest, as do Francine Morgan and Joseph Long as the faintly sinister servants. This beautifully paced production is certainly one of the most subtly engaging on the West End stage and, though the subject matter has an inevitable whiff of preciousness, the appeal of a dominating obsession is universal.

In fact, it is often the case in the theatre that the more specific the application of a play the wider its resonance and appeal. This is certainly true of Trevor Rhone's bouncy but sharp-edged two-hander set in Jamaica during the 1979 election. As the bullets whizz by outside, we focus on the personal crisis of Gloria and Jim. Their domestic situation is classic sit-com material — a proud, capable wife who has given a life of service to her useless but ultimately lovable husband. Corinne Skinner Carter has a deliciously regal air which is splendidly foiled by her doleful, clownish partner played by Allistair Bain.

Action centres on their desire to get away from an island where cigarettes cost $40 a carton and buying a bag of rice can mean getting involved in a riot. We learn the tricks involved in creating a new identity in order to secure a visa to the United States, and we get a good sense of the deprivations of Caribbean life which can force West Indians into desperate measures to get away. But there is no sermonising and the emotional consequences of Gloria's sudden flight to Florida are given as much weight as its political implications. The trip not only gives her a new, critical, but ultimately constructive view of her marriage, it also shows her the reality behind the American dream — two countries, one white, one black. The best thing about the play is that it is not only funny and moving, but also informative, weaving in exterior details without losing touch with the essential human core. Anton Phillips directs with vigour and imagination.

For yet more laughs I suggest a trip to the King's Head to catch up on the latest outburst of irreverence from one of our most talented stage comedians, John Sessions. He was stammering through a cold when I saw him, but still creating havoc with his new material on Dr Johnson. He should be well into his stride by now. □

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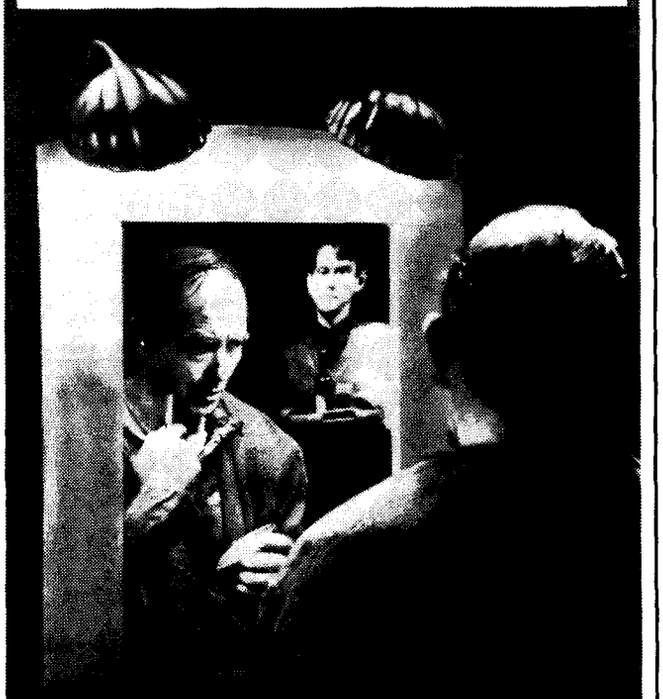

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Chosen for The Royal Film Performance 1984.

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LEEDS Odeon
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FROM FRIDAY MARCH 30 BIRMINGHAM Queensway Odeon
FROM FRIDAY APRIL 6 YORK Odeon
FROM FRIDAY APRIL 13 SHEFFIELD Gaumont
FROM FRIDAY APRIL 27 COLCHESTER Odeon

DETAILS CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS

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and a drummer, Vladimir Tarasov, got together to play what is still unsatisfactorily referred to as free jazz. All three of them live in Lithuania, at the westernmost edge of the Soviet Union. All have other jobs in music: Ganelin composes for films and TV, Chekasin composes too, while Tarasov is a percussionist with the Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra. Individual Russians have played jazz in Britain before (the trumpeter Valeri Ponomarev, for instance, with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers), but only after cutting off links with the homeland and emigrating to the United States. The Ganelin Trio, on the other hand, will soon be back in the Soviet Union, performing in 1,000-seater concert halls anywhere from Riga to Tashkent and even further beyond the Urals.

At the Bloomsbury Theatre, starting their tour of the Arts Council's Contemporary Music Network, the Trio began by sounding decidedly like their records. There were stock avant-garde digressions, like bowing a guitar placed on top of the piano. Ganelin went in for capering piano passages, sorties in the style of Cecil Taylor; Tarasov started off using the lightest of brush strokes. Yet Chekasin restricted himself at first to using just clarinet, trombone and — simultaneously — two alto saxophones (Roland Kirk, of course, in his heyday, could keep no fewer than three saxophones on the go). Being action-packed is not the same as telling a story. Yet a plot there undoubtedly was, for each of Ganelin's compositions has a pattern that stays the same, however extravagant the improvising. The overall impression, though, was of the busy cosmopolitanism indulged in by European free improvisers over the past decade and a half. That was before the identities of the performers began coming across, especially that of Chekasin — the only member of the trio, incidentally, to sport a red shirt.

Off-stage, Chekasin is the one who broods. And while the other two grew up in industrial cities, he belongs to the peasantry. As well as being a saxophonist of exceptional skills, however, Chekasin is also a mime, able to underline — sometimes to counterpoint — his playing with his face and body. It took a while for this to sink in. First one was surprised to find that when playing the clarinet he struck a pose just like Larry Shields in the old photographs of the original Dixieland Jazz Band. But his scope had become more apparent by the end of the first half, when he dropped in the spotlight like a distraught Petrushka.

However international jazz may have become, national characteristics still surface. German free players tend to be earnest as well as energetic, the Dutch opt for jokiness, the British for a technical involvement that could be reflecting the puritan work ethic. After the interval it became clearer where the Ganelin Trio fitted in, their juxtaposing of boisterousness and melancholy almost a Russian equivalent of the stomps and blues when jazz was young. How ironic, therefore, that the affirmation should occur most ebulliently inside 'New Wine', a piece revolving around the main phrase of 'Too Close For Comfort', that American pop-song for which Ella Fitzgerald has shown a special affection. In addition, it started off with Tarasov taking a drum solo which displayed all the extrovert correctness of Buddy Rich or Art Blakey, building upon the rudiments of the drummer's craft.

Chekasin revealed his instinct for the sardonic, Ayler-like blasts alternating with parodies of the sort of saxophone playing one used to run across in a local palais. The breathy ruminations of Ben Webster were explored next, before he wound things up by racing through the chord changes of 'Too Close For Comfort' (by now the tune had surfaced in its entirety), cultivating the kind of headlong virtuosity for which Paul Gonsalves used to be renowned. In one of the encores, 'Mack the Knife', it almost sounded as if Chekasin was imitating Paul Desmond. He danced as well, not the crisp tap routines of Harlem or old-time Broadway, more like a minor character in Gogol. And somewhere in the middle of a fairly outrageous solo he suddenly stopped, clapping a hand over his mouth like a little boy startled by his own temerity.

The Ganelin Trio are not innovators in a strictly musical sense. There are moments too, when, like most free players, they are guilty of longueurs. But their stance is fresh, their playing expert as well as exultant, and their Russian kind of theatricality produces the right sort of balance between the tragic and the absurd. Ever since jazz retreated from the dance floor and the vaudeville stage some musicians have tended to take themselves too solemnly. Yet people who get upset by, for example, the comicalities of the Dutch percussionist Han Bennink, or Lionel Hampton juggling with the drum-sticks as he dances on his tom-toms, are likely to miss the profundity which accompanies the sublimer kind of fooling. Certainly readers with broad tastes should sample what these three Russians are up to. They can be heard in Kendal this Friday (March 16), then in Leicester (Saturday, 17) and Birmingham (Sunday, 18) before appearing as a last-minute addition to the bill of the first night (Monday, 19) of the Camden Jazz Festival. □

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2813 **Set by Ellen Brigwell**

A recent item in the poet's corner of a local paper included the line, 'I live my life on a gloomy plane'. Let's have poems — any manner or mood — which include as many unintentional ambiguities as possible. Up to 12 lines, by 30 March.

No 2810 **Set by A. Boteman**

Verse beginning, 'I am a TV producer/fringe theatre actor/new Tory MP/trade union official/NS competitor...'

Report **By Mercy Dash**

Had we known that there was so much *Weltschmerz* out there in Compland, we would never have added to your angst with this challenge to your metrical talents, that certain ambiguity in those Three Last Dots. All those sad tales of years of struggle to achieve one Hon. Mensh. rendered Nero Sandberg's honest arrogance particularly refreshing. A Nightingale to him as to each winner, and a warm welcome to all new compers this week, so blessedly free of resentment against the humble toilers in the Complex. My apologies to those who were rash enough to mention Ms de Meaner by name. I tried to hide your entries but bloodhound-like she sniffed them out.

I am a new Tory MP,
With a business studies degree;
I'm an arrogant git who'd just as soon spit
On the suckers who voted for me.
I haven't much time for the wets;
My motto is: 'He who hath, gets.'
And my most fervent hope is to bring back the rope
For scroungers who don't pay their debts.
I am proud to belong on the Right,
And believe it's my duty to fight
With endurance and grit for the rights of each Brit
Whose skin is sufficiently white.

A. HARRADEN

I'm a TV producer and, they say, a perfect charmer:
Just two years with the Beeb and I had climbed to *Panorama*.
At Oxbridge I had learned the only skills that really matter —
The winning smile, the rounds of drinks, the knowing whom to flatter.
Now all I had to do, I felt, to expedite promotion,
Was plunge into controversy, provoke a grand commotion.
'Expose the Tory Right!' I cried. 'No Fascist leave unhounded!'
So well did I succeed that soon the MPs' writs abounded.
The Beeb stood by me loyally. Unshakeable, they took a
Determined stand; would not retract. Next week I'm doing snooker.

MICHAEL LEAPMAN

I am an NS Comper, it's my little claim to fame,
(Though by canny use of anagrams I often change my name).
Perhaps you think that I've encyclopaedias by the score
And diction'ries and almanacs and reference books galore.
Perhaps you think I work in Whitehall doing nothing much
But polishing my verses and governing and such;
Or else that I'm a witty don who's rather past his prime
And since he has no students does the comp to pass the time,
Or else that I'm a Mekon, or I'm Mephistopheles,
Or the President of Mensa. Well, you're right. I'm *all* of these!

NERO SANDBERG

I'm a fringe theatre actor; I am currently appearing
With the Camberwell Collective, and I wear a single ear-ring.
For our group, the task of theatre's deconstructing social norms --
Yes, that's why we did *Hay Fever* dressed in SS uniforms.
That concept first emerged within a workshop situation,
And you could describe what happened as an act of celebration
That becomes at once a statement about war, and sex, and race,
And a real-time exploration of the actor's inner space.
Our ambition? It's to reach the whole community we serve.
Just two last night? But both walked out! That shows we've touched a nerve!

GEORGE SIMMERS

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FIRST PERSON

Anne Smith

Old codgers

WHAT WAS all the carry-on about Macmillan's installation in the House of Lords? Longevity apart, what is his claim to the adulatory attention the media pay him? You'd think he was going to have a Royal baby the way they go on. I know his son died recently, and I'm sorry, but I remember even less about him than I do about his father.

All I can remember about the old codger is his winds of change, inflamed prostate (or was that Eden?) and the unfortunately immortal phrase lifted from the US Presidential campaign of 1952 (and *they* probably lifted it from a gangster movie), 'You never had it so good'.

It doesn't add up to much, but that doesn't matter now. For we have learned that something 'borrowed', something blue, a lot that's old and nothing new is sufficient to qualify a person for the peerage. Lord Kagan's there, isn't he? — and his maker, Lady Forkbender, and Lords Snowdon and Matthews, and, for all I know, Ronald Biggs (*in absentia*) and Gary Glitter.

So there's nothing surprising about Macmillan's irresistible rise to a position of great national irrelevance. What *is* surprising is the tones of sentimental sycophancy TV men used to describe his 'installation'. They said things like 'The familiar Macmillan voice is still there', to introduce a tape of him sounding like Eddison's recording of Tennyson played by a furred needle. They spared us no detail, however small. The oath had been printed extra-large so that eyes grown dim with reading Trollope when they should have been attending to reports about the homeless would not be strained. Because of his great decrepitude, he was excused kneeling.

I changed the channel. Frankly, I didn't think I could stand the bit where he teetered forward to grip the Queen's balls and pledge his sword to her service. And I expected he would look like Tiresias with his left breast bared and his trouser-leg rolled up over his thermal underwear.

A day or two later the TV news briefly showed a bunch of OAPs marching on Parliament to lobby for a rise in their pensions. This was 'balanced' by a somewhat longer report on how pensioners these days tend to fly south for the winter. Large numbers of them were shown doing aerobics and knees-ups in Benidorm, 'the Costa Geriatrica'. No attempt was made to explain, connect or indeed dissociate the two items, the second of which hardly qualifies as news, considering I'd already seen it last year on a holiday programme. There was probably a subliminal message there somewhere, about thrift and aimed at the under-60s, is my guess: 'If you want to have it good, be careful.'

My father worked at the coal-face till his extensive family grew up. Then he got heart-trouble and pneumoconiosis. He had to leave the pit and was unemployable. In the time when traditionally he would have been saving for his old age, he was on National Insurance and a microscopic pension. I knew three of his mates, now dead, who were in exactly the same position. I know an ex-forestry worker, a man of sixty now, who had to give up work because he is crippled with rheumatics from the nature of his job. I know a slater of the same age who has had to give up his job because dizziness caused by high blood pressure made him fall off roofs.

There must be thousands of men, and women, like that in this country now. It was only for a brief period in the Sixties that they had it good. Then they were helping their children make a start, or refurnishing their houses — throwing out the wartime utility furniture at last.

Of course, they were short-sighted. They should have realised that if they worked overtime at weekends all the time to buy unnecessary luxuries like encyclopaedias for their daughters and football strips for their sons they would shorten their lives in the end. They ought to have known there would be an Arab-Israeli war and an economic depression to cut the value of their life-savings in half by the time they were ready to retire.

But they didn't. So now they have to march on Parliament with begging-bowls, while the man who told them they'd never had it so good, a millionaire in an ermine robe, was inside being honoured by his country, and his also-to-be-ennobled descendants were guaranteed seats on boards for generations to come.

Roll on the revolution. But meanwhile, if any *NS* reader is collecting to erect a statue in the City in honour of the Unknown Worker, my Premium Bond is at your disposal. □

Among this week's contributors:

OLIVIA HARRIS lectures in anthropology at Goldsmith's College.

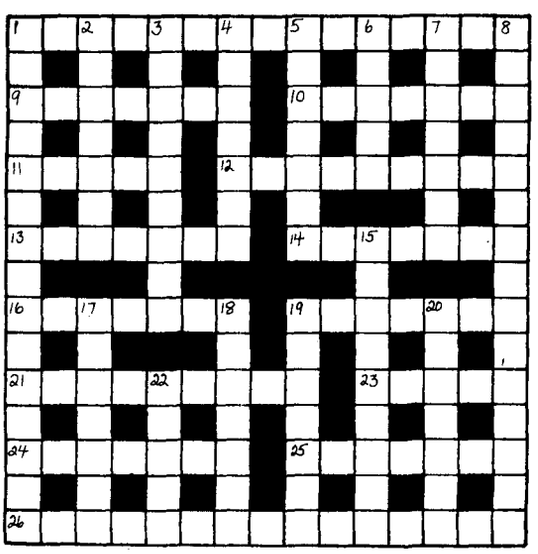
NICHOLAS JACOBS is the co-author of *Bertolt Brecht in Britain.*

RUPERT CHRISTIANSEN has been working on a history of the prima donna, due to be published shortly.

ANNE SMITH, who founded the *Literary Review* in 1979, is the author of *The Magic Glass.*

Weekend Crossword 1433

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1433, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 27 March.



ACROSS

1. His personal chop is used as the stamp of academic success (4,11)
9. Make an attractive appearance in a new singlet (7)
10. Part of plant in which a number take exercise, losing a pound (7)
11. Place of birth (5)
12. A cute hint is needed to reveal what is genuine (9)
13. It is fruitless, from whichever master I learn (7)
14. Adult appearing in an article right smart but old-fashioned (7)
16. Riverturned left and departed (7)
19. Playwright who is a tough guy and about a hundred (7)
21. Lancaster's change from the family past (9)
23. A small piece of territory is occupied (5)
24. It is above one's entitlement but not in time (7)
25. A dilapidated barn but grain is kept in it (7)
26. Thoroughly bad but taking a row to heart (6,2,3,4)

DOWN

1. Arranged a party for the workers (9,6)
2. Means of communication from street surrounded by oriental buildings (7)
3. Ditto from William possibly inside the ground (9)
4. Plant which brings death to a bird (7)
5. A universal title used for Paris (7)
6. Where to shoot a line (5)
7. Woman mainly composed of hot air (7)
8. Upholder of the law discovers writer and artist without licence (6,9)
15. Shrewd about the vital incredients to grow (9)
17. The first person is held by others to be the wealthiest (7)
18. Kind of punishment for people in the wrong (7)
19. Was Henry I merely a fish? (7)
20. Tailless animal returning thanks to mixed-up person (7)
22. Something growing gives point to the border (5)

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Further information and an application form are available from the Chief Executive, Management Services Division, Town Hall, East Ham, London E6 2RP or telephone 01-471 0619 (24 hour answering service).

Please quote reference ASC/339.
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There is a need for a further researcher to work in the team developing this general research and resource provision. In particular, the researcher appointed will consolidate work already undertaken over the past twelve months by taking specific responsibility for compiling and disseminating information on the local steel and engineering industries.

Research experience is essential, as is some knowledge of these industries. However, the most important considerations will be general research competence, and the ability to develop published research material for use in practical applications, projects and campaigns.

FURTHER DETAILS AND APPLICATION FORMS FROM EMPLOYMENT DEPARTMENT, SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL, PALATINE CHAMBERS, PINSTONE STREET, SHEFFIELD S1 2HN. TEL. 0742 755215 EXT. 219. CLOSING DATE 30 MARCH.

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Applications are invited for a post in the Transport & General Workers' Union's Research Department at their Central Office for a Research Assistant, to contribute to general policy briefing and the servicing of TGWU Trade Groups. A knowledge of manufacturing industries and especially the Automotive industry, would be an advantage.

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Written applications, including full c.v., are invited by 29 March, addressed to Mr R. Collins, Central Office Manager, TGWU, Transport House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3JB.

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Alcohol Concern (The National Agency on Alcohol Misuse) is a new charity, established with government support. These new posts offer a challenging opportunity to develop policies and services in the field of alcohol related problems and prevention.

Full details plus application forms from: Dianne Hayter, Director, Alcohol Concern, c/o 3 Grosvenor Cresent, London SW1 6LD.

Closing date for applications: **27 March** for last two listed; **6 April** for first four.

RESEARCH OFFICER

SOCIETY OF TELECOM EXECUTIVES

The Society of Telecom Executives wish to appoint a Research Officer as soon as possible. Experience in the trade union movement is essential but candidates will also be required to be numerate and have an ability to work with statistics.

Preference will be shown to candidates who can demonstrate experience in a similar capacity elsewhere in the labour movement.

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Further details and an application form can be obtained from the General Secretary, Society of Telecom Executives, 102-104 Sheen Road, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1UF.

Closing date for applications is 13 April 1984.

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LISTINGS

SAT 17 MARCH

SKEGNESS 'Unfair welfare is no funfair' Spkr Austin Mitchell MP. 1pm Manhatton Rm Parade Hotel. **Org. Leicester CPAG, C/O Marilyn Howard 5 Woodland Ave, Stoneygate, Leicester LE2 3HG.**

OSWESTRY 'Save our Health Service' Spkr Roy Hattersley MP, 7.30 pm. Castle Street Methodist Hall. **Org. Labour Party.**

ORMSKIRK 'Thatcherism, Welfare & Women' dayschool 10.30am-4.30pm. Spkrs. incl. Ian Gough, Marion Price. Free creche, disabled access. Edge Hill College of HE, St. Helens Rd. **Details: John Macdonald 0695 75171 x 299.**

KINGSTON KPC/CND Demo March against Cruise/Trident. Assemble 11am outside Kingston Poly, Penrhyn Rd. **Details: Kingston-on-Thames Peace Council John G. Noble, day 01-390 0102/546 5735 eves.**

SUN 18 MARCH

LONDON Educational Meeting on 'Relatives Action Committees'. Women Against Imperialism 4.30pm A Woman's Place, Hungerford House, Victoria Embankment WC2. Creche. Spkrs. Deirdre MacBride, Brid Keenan. **Org. London Armagh Grp. 01-836 6081.**

EAST ACTON Right of Repatriation for Irish Prisoners of War. Picket Wormwood Scrubs, Du Cane Rd, 1-3 pm. **Org. Irish Solidarity Movement, NLISC, BM Box 1320, WC1N 3XX.**

MON 19 MARCH

CARDIFF Public Enquiry into Political Policing in Wales. 10am S. Glamorgan County HQ, Newport Rd, Chair: Lord Gifford QC. **Details: Welsh Campaign for Civil & Political Liberties 13 Dogo St, Cardiff CF1 9JJ.**

DARTINGTON Talk by Dr Mike Downham & Keith Pattison on Medical Campaign against Nuclear Weapons visit to USSR. 7pm Dartington Arts Centre. **Details: 0325 483271.**

TUES 20 MARCH

LONDON Bloomsbury Society celebrates UN Day Against Racism. 2.30pm House of Commons. 7.30 pm County Hall Extravaganza. Message from Rev. Jesse Jackson. **Details: UN Information Centre 01-629 6411.**

WED 21 MARCH

LONDON 'Socialism, Democracy & Policing'. Spk Walter Easey, Head of Camden Police Cttee Support Unit. 7.30 pm Freemasons Arms, 81 Long Acre, WC2. **Details: Socialist Society, 9 Poland St, W1. 01-739 8501.**

LONDON 'Liberal Democracy in Africa: Has it a future?' Spkr Prof. Ali Mazrui 6 pm SOAS Assembly Hall. Adm 50p.

SUTTON 'Why I joined CND'. Spkr Ted Rogers of Ex-Services CND on conventional war and nuclear war. 8pm Friends Meeting House, Cedar Rd. **Details: Sutton CND 01-644 4408.**

THURS 22 MARCH

LONDON 'Defend London Democracy' discn. Spkrs. John McDonnell (GLC Finance chair), Phil Turner (Leader Camden Council). 8pm Kingsgate Community Centre, 107 Kingsgate Rd, NW6. **Org. Hampstead & Highgate Labour Party.**

LONDON 'Is writing enough' Spkrs. Maggie Gee, Ian McEwan, Ronald Blythe on role and responsibility of writers in CND. 6.45pm Upstairs, Freemason Arms, 81-82 Long Acre, WC2. 50p adm. **Org. BAND (Book Action for Nuclear Disarmament.)**

HORNSEY 'The Deterrent has worked! — Has it? Will it?' CND meeting 7.15pm Hornsey Town Hall, Crouch End B'way. Spkrs. Helen John, Dr. John Cox, CND Vice President. Adm. free. **Org. Hornsey CND.**

FRI 23 MARCH

BIRMINGHAM 'CND work in the regions' wkend conf. St. Francis Hall, University of Birmingham. **Details: 021 632 6009.**

SAT 24 MARCH

HACKNEY 'End British Collaboration with Apartheid!' Demo. 11am. Assemble Hackney Town Hall, Mare St. March to S.A. House for mass picket. **Org. City of London Anti-Apartheid Grp. 01-837 6050.**

LONDON 'Breaking the US Connection' — a 'Briefing' Discn./Conf. on Labour & NATO. 10.30-5pm County Hall, SE1. Spkrs incl. Alan Sapper, Jeremy Corbyn, Fred Halliday, Peter Tatchell, Tariq Ali. Tickets/Papers £1.50 from **Briefing International Cttee, 23 Bayston Rd, N16.**

LONDON Assessment and Black Children Seminar 10.15-4pm Polytechnic of Central London, 35 Marylebone Rd, NW1. Fee: £1.50 **Horace Lashley, Senior Education Officer, CRE, Elliot House, 10/12 Allington St, SW1E 5EH. Orgs Assoc. of African, Caribbean & Asian Academics/CRE.**

LICHFIELD Day Conf. 'Psychological stress of nuclear age' Friary Grange, creche. **Contact Dr Hazel Baker, Rockville, Cherry Orchard, Lichfield, Staffs.**

PORTSMOUTH 'Peace Movement & Eastern Europe' day conf. with E.P. Thompson (END) Zdena Tomin (Charter 77), Danielle Grunberg (Moscow Peace Grp). £4/£1 unwaged. **Details: G. Austin, c/o Students Unions END Museum Rd, 0705 669159.**

COVENTRY 'Workers against Racism' conf. 10-5pm plus evg social. KoKo Ltd. (Co-op centre), Unit 15, The Arches Industrial Estate, Spon End. Send £15/£1 unwaged for credentials Pam Lawrence, Workers against Racism, BM WAR, London, WC1N 3XX. **Details: 01-274 3951.**

FORTHCOMING

29 MARCH SWINDON 'Police and Criminal Evidence Bill' public meeting 7.30 pm Savernake Street Social Hall. Spkrs Gerry Danby, NCCL worker. **Org NCCL N. Wilts Grp., Sec. Laurence Taylor, 9 Stroma Way, Highworth, Swindon SN6 7HT. 0793 763095.**

29 MARCH LONDON 'Exam Results and School Effectiveness' lecture by Dr John Gray of Sheffield University. 5pm Manson Theatre, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Keppel St, WC1. **Details: Denise Lievesley, SCPR, 35 Northampton Sq, EC1.**

29 MARCH DUDLEY Racism in Britain. Public Discn. with Dave Cook, Nat. Sec. Campaign against Racist Laws. 7.30pm The Swan, Castle St. **Org Communist Party.**

30 MARCH COLCHESTER 'Due Process: English Law & the Convention on Human Rights' conf. 11.30am-9pm. Wivenhoe House, University of Essex. **Details: Centre for International Human Rights Law, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ.**

7 APRIL KENT Conf. convened by Kent County Council NALGO and Kent Trade Union Alliance. 2 pm Community Hall, Beechings Way, Twydall, Gillingham. Spkrs incl. Nick Bradley, Area Officer, NUPE. **Details: Reg Humphreys, Kent NALGO Branch Office, County Hall, Maidstone. 671411.**

13 APRIL WAKEFIELD Anti-nuclear rally 7.30pm Unity Hall. Adm. 50p. **Details: Jim & Sally Whitman 0924 361490.**

14-15 APRIL NOTTINGHAM 'Disarmament and Independent Foreign Policy for Britain' discn. conf. at Nottingham University. **Details: Anne Kestenbaum, Bernard Russell Peace Fdn. 0602 708318.**

16-21 JULY NEWCASTLE Third International Seminar on tertiary educational and staff development at Newcastle Polytechnic. Co-operative format, action learning. **Details/Registration BY APRIL: Chris de Winter Hebron, Humanities Faculty, Lipman Bldg, Newcastle Polytechnic 0632 612181.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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GROUPS/ MEETINGS

ARE YOU SEEKING occultists, witches, groups/communes etc? Also nationwide/worldwide pen-friends. Please send stamp to: Baraka Aegis, The Golden Wheel, Liverpool L15 3HT.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme. Sunday 18 Mar. 8 p.m. Commemoration Meeting. 'Wm. Q. Judge – A Great Theosophist'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

'TOWARDS AN INDEPENDENT INCOME FOR WOMEN'. Educational workshop organised by Rights of Women Campaign for Legal and Financial Independence for Women. **10.30-5.30, 17 March.** Marble Arch Intensive English School, 21 Star St, London W2. Women only/creche, no disabled access. Discussions on: (1) Social Security and Women. (2) Lessons to be learnt from the 1975 Social Security Reforms. (3) Occupational Pensions. (4) Women's employment – now and the future. (5) Women's Rights and social dividends. Registration: £6 Orgs., £3 Employed, £1.50 Unemployed/Students. Details – ROW, 01-278 6349.

TRADE UNIONS and GLC YEAR AGAINST RACISM CONFERENCE
Friends House, Euston Road, London, NW1
SATURDAY 24 MARCH. 10am-4.30pm
Speakers include: Ken Livingstone, John Daly (NALGO), Amrit Wilson, Bob Hughes MP, Chilean group-Quimantu.
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LECTURE

The First **ROBERT BIRLEY MEMORIAL LECTURE:** 'Robert Birley and the Concept of a Liberal Education' by Lord Grimond of Firth, *Oliver Thompson Lecture Theatre*, City University, Northampton Square, London EC1, Tuesday 27 March 6 p.m. Free without ticket.

EVENTS

GREENPEACE EASTER BIKE RIDE. GRETNA GREEN TO ULVERSTON, 20-22 April. Details: Bike Events, PO Box 75, Bath, Avon.

BOOKS

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AM I the sole right-winger out here? If only The Economist ran a *Heartsearch column! Blonde,* 5' 2", eyes blue, 112 lbs, old enough to know better. Own business City, lives North Essex/Cambs borders. Seeks talkative male, probably 45+, good driver. Must like wining and wining, also dining. Object: who knows? Don't send photograph, personality more important. Box 7888.

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ATTRACTIVE, LIVELY MINDED professional lady, excellent hostess, Yorkshire. Would welcome caring, sharing relationship with unattached gentleman used to the good things in life, fifties. Box 7875.

ATTRACTIVE, PROFESSIONAL man (58), divorced, loves arts, seeks attractive, intelligent, sensual, non-smoking woman, slim-medium, any race/circumstances, for warm *friendship/enjoyments, preferably* London/surrounding areas. Box 7582.

AVERAGE LOOKING *male,* 33, 5' 6", composer/writer/part-time teacher, seeks affectionate, caring woman to be his friend, and to type his poems. Box 7867.

BOOKISH NOMAD (37), unsalaried but solvent, seeks friendly, free and footloose *woman to share usual London entertainments,* the great outdoors and maybe future wanderings. Box 7859.

COMMUNIST PROFESSIONAL man, 55. Busy unorthodox lifestyle. Independent, solvent, free of family, needs mate, any age, *any race. Share travel, reading, writing,* commitment. Box 7887.

CRETE 1983. Unforgettable girl, dark hair streaked silver grey, walking Samaria Gorge Sunday 19 June wearing multi-coloured spotted bikini, yellow safari shirt/shorts, carrying blue Adidas bag, contact Box 7730.

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FEMALE LOVER, 33, of music, literature, cinema, theatre, travel and socialism, seeks an attractive, intelligent, witty male to share it all with (London based). Box 7736.

FEMALE, 43, Manchester-based, *well* established in life, left-wing, with bourgeois tastes, seeks male for sincere, committed and lasting relationship. No Tories please. Box 7872.

GAY FEMALE. Is there a discreet 28-38, *seeking caring attention, who does not like* domestic chores and needs a good home? South London area. Box 7883.

GREEK PROFESSIONAL MAN, 38, single, interested politics, reading, music, theatre, films, seeks attractive, sensual woman to share friendship, love and interests. Photos appreciated. London. Box 7874.

JEWISH WOMAN PhD with successful career, interests: opera, walking, cinema, politics, now seeks similarly successful stable *relationship with caring, intellectual,* witty Jewish man, 30-45. Box 7853.

LADY, NOW UNATTACHED, 50s, seeks similar gentleman, N/S, for friendship, visits to concerts, galleries, walking and extension of horizons. Car owner. Avon/Somerset/Wilts area. Box 7881.

LIVELY-MINDED, *active woman graduate,* 40, would like to meet similar non-sexist man. Interests include sailing, politics, bridge but open to new ideas. Herts/London. Box 7891.

LONDON-BASED WORKING lady, 55, presentable, 5' 8", enjoys life, especially travel, *music, canals, gardens,* needs honest *gentleman friend, mutual care, respect,* happiness. Box 7861.

LONDON MALE, 34, socialist, non-smoker, social science teacher, enjoys independent cinema, real ale, long walks, long talks, occasional solitude, occasional togetherness, seeks similar woman. Box 7815.

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LONELY LEFT-WING professional, early thirties, exiled in Birmingham, seeks progressive/feminist girlfriend, with an idea of getting it together and enjoying living. Box 7737.

MALE LINGUIST, with new car, available for possibly Continental holiday. Prefer lady, 45 to 65, who likes good music, conversation, gentle studious life. Box 7856.

MALE, SINGLE, early 30s, left-wing, doctorate, writer, living in London, seeks non-racist female over 20. Interests: theatre, cinema, music, travel, literature. Box 7765.

NORTH DERBYSHIRE/South Yorkshire, slim, elegant arts graduate, early thirties, divorced, 5' 7", professional job, non-smoker, enjoys theatre, cinema, travel, seeks companionship locally. Box 7854.

ONLY A FOOL is always right. Unattached, unsententious London man seeks lively, warm-hearted, humorous lady, forties, to share vernal pursuits. Box 7876.

PERSONABLE, EDUCATED, unattached Indian woman, 40s, would like to meet professional, educated Englishman, 45, and over, has to be serious and sincere. Box 7858.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN, mid 40s, seeks caring, professional man, good sense of humour, share cinema, theatre, country walks, classical music, intelligent conversation. Box 7877.

SINCERE, ATTRACTIVE, Hindu divorcee, 42, with daughter 17, seeks genuine home-loving, well settled, professional gentleman, 40-48. Children welcome. View marriage. Photo essential. Box 7779.

SINGLE, MALAYSIAN nursing sister, Islington area, 44, plump, attractive, varied interests, seeks left-wing male for sincere, warm, committed relationship and holidays together. Box 7796.

STRUGGLING AUTHOR, filled with Prufrockian hesitations, seeks woman, 40-50, easy-going, affectionate, hopefully interested in writing herself. Box 7855.

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UNIVERSITY TEACHER, 58, slim, tall, interests: visual arts, mathematics, would like to meet kind, intelligent woman, London or Bristol, for close relationship. Box 7873.

WIDELY-TRAVELLED author and PhD, interested in the arts; sportsman aged 45; seeks relationship with slim, independent female; will reply to all letters and return photographs. Box 7889.

WIDOW WORKING abroad would like to correspond with normal, unattached man over 55. Open-minded, interested in many things. Box 7857.

WOMAN, 44, divorced, non-smoker, nearly vegetarian, left, likes cinema, walking, photography, seeks warm, easy-going man to share my life in North Herts. Box 7850.

WOMAN, 36, artist, hovering unsurely between youth and maturity, seeks mature man, 36-50, to share enriching times ahead. Box 7882.

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